Saskatchewan Education

Lives of Children

Saskatchewan

August, 1982

Lives of Children:
Saskatchewan Facts

Dr. M. L. Olesen
July, 1982.

Lives of Children

The Lives of Children: Saskatchewan Facts has been prepared as a background paper for the Minister's Advisory Committee for the Curriculum and Instruction Review and for the general public in preparation for the submission of briefs and for public meetings.

The purposes of this paper are to describe the school aged children of Saskatchewan, to describe those factors in their lives affecting their educational needs and to explore the implications for the schools based on their educational needs.

In preparation for this paper a number of interviews were conducted as well as a search of the literature.

This paper is organized into five major sections.

Beginning with a preface and introduction, section one describes children as part of the provincial population in an attempt to define their educational needs with reference to other large provincial groups. In our province declining enrolments affect the lives of rural and urban children. An expansion of services to new clients, of new services to the school children and the school closure are the current alternatives. Some ways of providing alternatives are discussed.

Section two describes children as part of more specific groups. These groups are organized into general subsections according to differences in residence, differences due to socioeconomic level and differences due to innate differences. Some groups discussed are: rural children, urban children, poor children, migrant children, rich children, children with disabilities, gifted children and children in hospitals.

Implications for the schools are smaller classes, more teacher preparation time in order to meet the diverse needs of children in such groups and

community involvement. The issue of the school as a social service agency is explored.

Sections three, four and five describe children in their surroundings; the home, school and community respectively. The section, Children in Their Homes describes the differences among families due to composition, the differences among families due to culture and/or language, families at risk and concerns within the family. Some topics included are: children of divorce, lone parent families, wards of the court. Issues addressed are: child death and safety, nutrition, television, day care, runaways, teenage mothers and juvenile offenders.

The fourth section describes the needs of children in schools, some current concepts related to learning and some issues in education in the 80's. Some issues are discipline, readiness, dropouts, middle schools. Implications for the schools include a proposal for Division I community schools and Division III work-school partnership.

Finally, section five briefly describes the need for community involvement in the schools and the benefits to the children.

In the conclusion, the children have the last word!

M. L. Olesen
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I wish to thank the following people for their time, information, sources and resources.

Terry McKague, project director and members of the Advisory Committee, David Haywood-Anderson, Bob Arkel, Glen Belsey, Lynn Carter, Gary Curtis Kathy Dotson, Dennis Exner, Adrian Gibbons, Rob Henderson, Dorothy Hudec, John Hylton, Louis Jule, Susan Kahan, Shirley McKendry, Jane Naisbett Saskatchewan Education Resource Centre, David Rosenbleuth, Terry Russell, Harold Schultz, Alan Sobel and S.T.F. Resource Centre.

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Children, the very word, brings at once visions of groups of happy laughing youngsters splashing in local swimming pools, rows of eager anxious faces in classrooms, groups of boys and girls in doctors' offices, young adults leaning on cars in a shopping mall, working at the local fast food chain, children individually playing in an orchestra, hitting a home run, sprinting across the finish line, riding a bicycle alone at midnight or wrestling with their brothers.

Children alone, in groups, as individuals or in general make up a complex array of interrelationships and interactions within and among themselves, with older or younger children, in families and in their communities.

There are several themes in child development propelling youngsters to grow and develop. One rather critical and prominent one is the development from dependence to independence. The ramifications of this theme are felt intellectually, socially, physically and emotionally at all ages and by all members of our society. This theme becomes the focal point of services for children and the responsibilities of children. The final working out of the balance between independence and dependence is a lifelong search. The acceptance and development of this delicate fluid balance constitutes the essence of becoming an adult.

Taking into account this complex array and this underlying theme, this paper endeavours to describe the lives of Saskatchewan children.

Within this paper there are several underlying assumptions of which the reader needs to be aware.

First, the term education is used in broad definitions. It is assumed that in schools, education is essential to the growth and nurturance of

children.

Second, it is assumed that education should be based on the needs of children. Under the section called Children in Schools, these needs will be presented.

Third, this paper assumes that if the child has any sort of need which impedes his growth it will impede his education and thus the school is interested in providing for these needs. lndeed the school has little choice.

The final assumption is that the home is the foundation upon which children base their growth.

Children become secure enough to venture out on their own, to risk asserting their independence only when they have been provided with and can depend upon the security from a home that is always available for retreat and for the support of new and exciting steps into life. The school and community, while they have unique roles in nurturing a child and in supporting the home, will only out of necessity assume the responsibilities for the home. The reason for this reluctance lies not in the uncaring attitude of the school personnel, rather it is a conviction that the child's basic security and fulfillment of psychological needs toward becoming a secure, competent individual in society, is provided through the home.

And if the tender plants are stripped
Of their joy in the springing day
By sorrow and care's dismay
How shall the summer arise in joy
Or the autumn fruits appear.

(W. Blake)

Children as Part of the Saskatchewan Population

1981-82 school age population is approximately 204,000 children.

Saskatchewan Education Annual Report 1980-81, page 37, numbers our K-12 school population at 206,755. This figure includes Rural and City Divisions, Government Aided Schools, Government Correspondence Schools, Developmental Centres and private schools. It does not include schools operating under the administration of the Department of Northern Saskatchewan or the School for the Deaf. These schools add 2,500 (Northern Saskatchewan, 1980-81, p.11) and 119 children (Saskatchewan Education, 1980-81, p.40) respectively.

Declining enrolments would reduce the reported 1981 figure to about 204,000 children (Clark, 1979, p.49). Such a figure is supported using a high prediction formula and the limits of school inclusion used by Saskatchewan Continuing Education (printout, 1982).

The following population trends are predicted (Belsey, 1978).

> Total grade enrolment will decline by approximately 1,500 each year to 2000 A.D. All enrolments have peaked with grade XII peaking in 1980-81. Grade I enrolment will now remain constant to 1990 and then decline to 2000 A.D. while Grade IV will decline slightly to 1995 and then begin a more rapid decline, Grade VIII will decline to 1990, increase by 1,000 per year and then decline more rapidly to 2000 A.D. Grade XII will decline rapidly to 1985, decline more slowly and then increase slightly to the year 2000 A.D.

Nationally we educate approximately 4% of the Canadian school age

population. Our enrolment decrease is within the national range of 1-3% per year.

Our closest neighbours in terms of numbers of children to educate is Manitoba. Alberta educates double that number.

Nationally 4% of the school population is educated in private schools (Statistics Canada, Education in Canada, 1981, p.5). In Saskatchewan slightly more than 1% are educated in private schools (Saskatchewan Education, 1980-1981, p.37).

Numbers of males and females are relatively equal.

In 1978, between the ages of 0-19 there were 174,700 males and 167,300 females in Saskatchewan (Saskatchewan Health Annual Report, 1979-80, p.13). From Statistics Canada, 1976, (91-512) the numbers of males and females in Saskatchewan in the 5-9, 10-14, 15-19 age groups does not vary by more than 2,000.

Numbers of rural and urban children are relatively equal.

While male and female distribution in rural and urban areas also remains relatively equal, the variation in school age population is quite different depending on which definition of urban is used for statistical calculation.

Statistics Canada, 1976, reports 38,000 rural and 40,035 urban age 5-9 children. Urban is defined as a settlement with a concentration greater than 1,000 and with a density of at least 1,000 per square mile. The difference becomes quite great between the 47,635 rural and 95,310 urban 10-14 year olds and the 44,265 rural and 96,925 urban 15-19 year olds.

This also represents a shift (1971-1976) from rural to urban areas of -5.9 and +4.2 respectively.

The Saskatchewan Education Annual Report 1980-81 defines urban as the 12 Saskatchewan cities with a population of 5,000 and over. Using such a definition there is little variation between numbers of rural and urban school age children.

Since bussing over large areas would still be an issue in smaller urban areas (between a 1,000 and 4,999 population) this paper will use the Saskatchewan Education definition of urban.

20% of the total population is 12 and under.

The 1981 Economic Review of Saskatchewan (p.27) cites three groups of people who constitute our greatest population as follows: 0-9 years of age 16.3%, 10-19 group 18.4% and 20-29 group 17.5%. A Saskatchewan Health Report cites 20% as the approximate number of children 12 years and under in 1980, which will remain relatively constant to 1990.

Declining enrolments are due to birth rate decline and a shift to an older average age in our total population.

As reported in the Leader Post, July 6, 1982, the average age in Canada is 29.6. There is a reported 7% decrease in numbers of children 14 years and under. Registered Indian children 12 and under constitute approximately 45% of all Registered Indian people in the province (Saskatchewan Health, 1980).

The 1976 fertility rate for the prairies is an average of 2.1 children per woman. There are more women in the child bearing age group. In 1979

in Saskatchewan the numbers of live births was 16,977 offset by 7,348 deaths with a natural increase of 9,629 people. This increase is consistent with the gradual total population increase for this province since 1974 (Saskatchewan Health Annual Report, 1980).

The mortality age has also increased to approximately the age of 72 for males and 79 for females (Gnanasekaran, 1976, p.7).

Interprovincial and international migration has little effect on the school age population.

During the years 1974-78 Saskatchewan's Interprovincial Migration rate has been positive and a gain. 544; 2,138; 1,907; and 94 people respectively have moved in. In 1978, 2,100 people migrated to Saskatchewan from other provinces and nations. If 20% are children, then our net gain for the school age population is 400 (Clark, 1979, P.96,97).

Exactly what do all these statistics have to do with the educational needs of children and the implications for the schools?

First, we know there are four rather large groups of children in Saskatchewan to whom we need to address our efforts. These groups are males, females, urban and rural children. Numerically these groups are almost equal, the thrust of equal opportunity for education should be concentrated upon all four groups.

Secondly, we know that nationally, Saskatchewan's school population is small. Therefore, when comparing ourselves to other provinces, let us remember we are different in available funding, in expenditures required, thus providing a unique situation perhaps only comparable to Manitoba.

Third, since our number of privately educated children is well

below the national average (4%), perhaps there is no need yet to push the panic button concerning the provision of schools to accommodate differing lifestyles and religions. Perhaps private schools may provide for some of the diverse needs of our Saskatchewan children.

Finally, the most prominent pressing issue which influences educational needs and school implications is the current declining enrolments.

Women are having fewer babies even though there are more women in the child bearing age. Migration gains and losses do not affect the overall school age population. In Saskatchewan there are gradually becoming more and more older people in proportion to the young. Thus the economic producers will gradually have more people to support (pensioners). While 20% of the people are children, the larger number of older people will of necessity compete for the gross income of the province.

Can we ever hope to receive at least 20% or 1/5 of the provincial gross domestic product for the education and care of children?

What are the educational needs of males and females; urban and rural children?

These will be addressed in the next sections entitled Children in Schools and Children As a Part of Specific Groups in Saskatchewan respectively.

The educational needs of significant minorities will also be addressed in subsequent sections.

Throughout the paper all ideas about implications for the schools will be matched against the characteristics of this province in relation to other Canadian provinces. While alternatives from provinces who educate large numbers of children may be useful perhaps they will require adoption.

Since all children in Saskatchewan face the results of a declining

population in schools, the educational needs and school implications due to declining enrolment is the final subject in this section.

Some educational needs of children result from the action taken due to declining enrolments.

Much of the controversy centres on the quality of education. Efforts and suggestions are directed at discovering a means of managing the decline without doing serious damage to standards or restricting choices (Clark, 1979, p.69).

Thus the needs of children focus around maintaining sufficient flexibility in school organization and course content to appeal to different interests, abilities and talents.

One essential need is to be valued and recognized as a worthwhile, contributing individual. This becomes increasingly difficult among many children when the teacher is ill prepared due to little preparation time, due to lack of skill in working with wide age and subject ranges, due to an overload of content to teach and finally due to not having the resources and time to devote to the ever increasing yet non-academic but critical factors which either facilitate or impede learning.

If schools see this decline as an opportunity to provide more preparation time (through grouping) for teachers who are usually at the point of working with double or triple the material due to a split or mixed grade class - the result could be an education of quality thus the children's educational needs diverse as they are, will be met.

If schools see this decline as an opportunity to provide more expertise by working across grades using specialists in music, art and physical education - the result could be an education of quality thus the children's educational needs diverse as they are, will be met.

Further, the schools can prepare the children for the possible closing of their school by transporting classes of students to neighbouring schools in order to take advantage of working with a specialist and thus many classes could use the same perhaps better equipment and facilities.

If schools see this decline as an opportunity to provide a few children with one teacher in order that the teacher may help alleviate some of the ever increasing pressures on children due to family changes, community expectations, etc. - the result could be an education of quality thus the educational needs diverse as they are, will be met.

If schools at the secondary levels can provide inservice so teachers know how to teach more than one subject within a classroom at the same time then course offerings do not need to be reduced and the diverse needs and interests of students could be met. These subjects could be taught utilizing technology, correspondence courses, learning centres or modular units of programmed learning.

Other implications for the school focus on the recovery of the cost of operating a school for a limited number of children.

Perhaps in the summer months and evenings the school can provide office space for seasonal or shift workers. There may be room for the community doctor, dentist's office in the school, thus benefiting both the doctors and the families in the community.

Day Care centres now housed in expensive and sometimes most unattractive surroundings could provide some revenue to the school system but more important great educational dividends to the children and their parent or parents. To take your children to a Day Care Centre operating within the local community, indeed within the school which they will eventually attend,

provides a sense of community and stability so necessary for the development of young children.

With our increase in numbers of older people in our province their needs for community will become more evident. Schools could provide recreation centres, physical fitness centres, indeed, many supports for these citizens. Perhaps if the older citizens were more visible we would realize how much they have to offer children and adults alike. Perhaps space in schools could be found to provide for offices so we may consult with older yet expert teachers, business men or civil servants. As the children will be involved in producing for a large older population, now is the time to develop a sense of understanding, caring and responsibility for these older people. Conversely, with fewer youngsters, we must be vigilant in protecting their need for an education of quality.

Business and upgrading schools are now using a variety of locations - why not schools? Surely a Kindergarten to Grade VI school would not be too threatening for those returning for upgrading even for a former dropout.

Many volunteer agencies have to rent space or are provided space by our government - Big Brothers, Big Sisters, the Red Cross, Chamber of Commerce - all these agencies, volunteer, government or private, could provide children with a glimpse into the world from the security of their community school. They may even become interested in a career - for example, a community newspaper being produced down the hall may whet the appetite of junior journalists.

Whatever alternatives are tried, declining enrolments give schools an opportunity to rethink their goals, decide where they fit into the community and how they could be involved in a mutually beneficial relationship.

Working with declining enrolments requires gradual preparation,

planning, brainstorming, seeking ideas from local citizens, older citizens, teachers, business men and of course from the children who often surprise even the most astute teachers. A public who has been involved over the long term will tend to cooperate even if the only viable alternative is to close the school.

Children as Part of a Specific Group In Saskatchewan

In this second section the following groups of children will be described, those factors affecting their educational needs will be identified and implications for the school will be explored: rural children, urban children, migrant children, disabled children, gifted children and children from various economic levels.

This report groups these specific groups into three sections. Children in groups by residence, children in groups by socioeconomic level and children in groups due to innate differences. Children in groups due to cultural differences will be discussed in the section called Children in Their Homes.

Children in Groups By Residence

Rural Children

Rural children are affected by declining enrolments, bussing, limited choices in Div. IV and differing values.

The approximately 100,000 children in the rural areas as defined by Saskatchewan Education may live on farms or in farming communities of up to 4,999 people.

Saskatchewan children are entitled to an education between the ages of 6 and 16. The compulsory age is 7 to 16 years of age. Most six year olds are enrolled in schools and many five year olds are involved in Kindergarten or

Preschool programs.

Declining enrolments are felt most keenly in the rural schools because children who are perhaps already bussed face longer rides and thus more time on buses. The supervision and quality of life upon these buses varies from district to district. This may or may not pose any difficulties for children. For example, if a bus is filled with a rowdy group of youngsters, the children may arrive at school their energy already spent. However, if the bus is too rigidly controlled perhaps the backlash of response presents behavior problems at school.

Another concern re bussing is the tremendous amount of time spent riding to and from school. This time eats into children's play time; recreational activities and thus opportunities of which they are able to take advantage; and project, homework and research time which limits the enrichment schools are able to provide.

Safety standards are of concern particularly if the children move around on the bus. Certainly, the escalating cost of bus transportation is a critical factor in budgets.

Generally parents are concerned that sitting on a bus is not childlike behavior and consequently are wary about any bussing situation. Such concerns have spilled into urban areas where although bussing times are very short eleviating most problems, resistance to bussing has become an issue in the closure of schools.

The general and special needs of rural Native children become a clouded issue and will be addressed in a subsequent section. However, in some instances, reserve and non reserve people have tried to cooperate in order to keep their local schools. The success of such attempts have varied. Native people need to be guaranteed mutual control in such schools.

The special needs of rural disabled students, rural gifted children and rural poor children will be considered in following sections.

"The provision of the rural program is characterized by lower pupil-teacher ratio, more multi-grade classes; by sharing resources; by using general and special purpose transportation and in many cases by including the Division I, II, III programs in a school with Division IV." (Saskatchewan Education, Feb. 1981, p.9) Thus the educational needs of urban children do not differ from rural children.

The problem of limiting choice in Division IV is already addressed in this paper around educational needs and declining enrolments.

The people of rural Saskatchewan have one major criticism of the existing facilities. That is, the content of the existing programs seems to work counter to the development in rural students of a sense of optimism, pride, and eagerness to explore the rural setting and its many opportunities and advantages (Saskatchewan Education, Feb. 1981). This criticism is confirmed in other studies (Hobbs, 1981) (Gurstein, 1978).

The sense of community, the spirit of cooperation, the respect for nature, the ability to innovate are all part of the essence....(of rural life) (Saskatchewan Education, Feb. 1981, introduction).

Such a criticism brings to light another educational need of rural children from the perception of the community and parents. Children need to develop a sense of community and a commitment to the values of rural life.

There are some indications that the values of rural people are slightly different. The rural population of Saskatchewan is one reason given for the probable stability in the fertility rate. It is known that the development of family relationships in larger families is quite different from

smaller families. Thus larger families living in a rural area could account for a different lifestyle and values. The rural population apparently rewards and punishes different values in schools.

Lawson, 1977, suggests that rural children are more readily rewarded for service while urban children are rewarded for competence.

When discussing the implications there are further indications that the rural values may be different. Rural people believe that community decision making is essential to the development of the rural community spirit. This decision making has a great impact on the school. Traditionally the community was responsible for hiring the teacher, building the school and in general, for supporting the education of the local youngsters. Many readers have personal knowledge about how their grandparents were the first agitators for schools in rural Saskatchewan.

Thus, the most critical implication for the rural school is to seek the opinions and information from the community regarding the solutions for the educational needs of their local children and then to work with the community towards a solution.

Using local resource personnel to develop programs for, a pride in and a commitment to the community and rural life is not only possible, it is indeed the most feasible. The larger issue of local curriculum development and of decentralization or centralization which has its basis in this conviction is a subject for other subprojects of the Minister's Advisory Committee for the Curriculum and Instruction Review.

There are many rural schools which house K-12 in the same facility. While the programs themselves are similar to urban schools and the numbers enrolled are similar, the age range within the complex is wide. Such a range can foster caring, cooperation, the development of knowledge and

understanding of others and the possibility of diverse relationships. However, the same range could set up such competitiveness and rivalry that the results could be damaging to children. Many educational needs can result from the above possible interactions.

Schools have responded by providing planned interactions among the students in Family Life Courses, through a Read-to-Me program between grades, lunch time family groupings and a buddy system for the bussing. The nature of these responses is to involve the wide range of age groups in the school in all facets of programs. As we see, the very nature of rural education, K-12 schools for example, lends itself to the development of the community spirit.

Perhaps urban schools could profit from this kind of community spirit.

Urban Children

Urban children experience declining enrolments, two working parents, apartment living, more available resources, and more available consumer goods.

Among our 98,359 children who live in cities with a population of 5,000 or more, there exists many smaller groups.

The needs of children such as native, migrant and poor children will be explored in later sections. In describing these children this report consciously avoids drawing conclusions by association. For example, the educational needs of native children are not only due to a shift to city (urban) living but also due to family socioeconomic level and cultural differences.

What are the general needs of urban children?

They do not experience any greater or lesser declining enrolments thus the discussion concerning needs, the reaction and action of rural

schools is applicable to urban children.

The children would certainly spend less time aboard a bus. Traditionally, our education has provided the neighbourhood school within easy walking distance. It has been with a sense of pride that urban dwellers have boasted that their home is within two blocks of a school. Perhaps the parents, now urban residents, remember as children their three mile walks to school. Perhaps too as those who did not experience this "hardship" become parents the resistance to bussing will decrease. Certainly if boards are going to use it, it should be gradually introduced in order to provide an enriched program for the able child, to gather isolated small groups together for Kindergarten for example, to gather children with exceptional needs together for integration, to transport diverse groups of children to neighbouring elementary and high schools in order to take advantage of facilities, equipment and resources. Bussing thus introduced may become less threatening.

In urban areas working mothers with school age children number 50,000. In rural areas the number is 9,652 for women working on a farm. According to the number of T-4 forms filed, 4,404 non-farm women in the rural areas were working mothers. These figures indicate that there is some need for day care facilities because women are working off the farm in the rural areas. These figures are approximates.

Working "outside" the home is a stipulation because urban children experience differences in lifestyle when they may have to go to their homes without the presence of an adult usually the mother.

Such differences constitute different needs for urban children.

Society attributes many ills to the lack of parental control in the home. Whether this control would be present if the mother or at least one parent was in the home all day is not known. Likely not. However, vanda-

lism is not subject to the income or community status of the family. Loneliness is not subject to the income or community status of the family. Aloneness is not subject to the income or community status of the family.

Poor children and rich children go home alone. Being home alone may help to enhance a sense of family responsibility and involvement or it may serve to isolate the child in the family.

In a recent survey of grade four and five students, ten of twenty children were alone over the noon hour. The income of the families would be well above $20,000 per year. These children all had chores to do, practicing to do, lists of interesting things to do, did not cite T.V. as their only source of entertainment. They were lonely on occasion but consciously avoided those situations and did use the T.V. for comfort. They did not like being at home alone and yet they accepted it as part of their lifestyle. Within this group, due to discussions, they set up a buddy system to telephone if lonely. The level of knowledge concerning first aid, safety, etc., varied slightly.

What seemed to predominate was a set of rules that tended to isolate the children from situations which perhaps the parents knew their children could not handle. For example, other children were not allowed in the house in some situations, in others, only particular children were allowed in. Children were forbidden to use some household equipment in some instances. Finally, the parents were able to check often and regularly by telephone.

However, we have all heard hair raising stories about what has happened in the community to the children and to the family home when some children are alone.

Numbers of children in the family who are home alone add a new dimension which is potentially either more dangerous (accidents, sibling rivalry,

etc.) or less disruptive as the youngsters isolate each other from loneliness.

Children can respond positively to their situation until parent or parents return from work or respond negatively be it in the form of being a public nuisance, drug and alcohol abuse, sexual activity or vandalism. The number of schools who rated crime and vandalism as serious in an American study was higher in cities (15%) than in rural areas (6%)(Passow, 1982). Their reaction seems to be a function of the age maturity of the child and the family expectations.

Thus, the needs of these children vary by family. Some educational needs could be more time to talk with adults, more project work and enrichment work for the hours alone, guidance concerning safety in the home, first aid, dealing with the telephone, people at the door and information about extra curricular programing in the school and community.

Some schools have responded by initiating a parent operated noon hour exchange. One working parent takes responsibility for five to six children of working parents for a week each six weeks and then the responsibility rotates. All employers are flexible enough to permit a stable noon break and a little extra time for traveling.

Some schools have responded by identifying the latch key children and working with them according to their needs above. These programs are most successful when the parents themselves are the resource personnel.

Apartment living is an experience for more urban children. The educational needs of these children vary from the need for play space and the need for active rigorous recreation to the need for quiet work time.

Schools are responding by insuring daily physical education, by initiating community organized creative playgrounds in school grounds

and arranging flexible long hours for their libraries.

Another difference that affects the lives of children in the urban areas is due to the concentration of grant money. While the grant rate differs only slightly and the size of actual schools varies slightly, the opportunity for and proximity of community resources, shared equipment, shared staff and program and support services is greater. The effect upon children is that there is a richer school system environment upon which to draw in the cities. Whether these are actually used will be pursued in another subproject of the Minister's Advisory Committee for the Curriculum and Instruction Review. The activities designed to utilize an equally rich but different rural environment as well as how rural areas are tapping community resources, sharing equipment and using personnel expertise will also be explored.

Finally, perhaps urban children in general are subjected to more consumer sources. There is a store on every corner and the businesses actively seek the money of youngsters in gimmicks, sales and giveaways.

All children rural or urban are influenced by television, however, there are more opportunities to have to actually make choices, from a wide selection and from many stores in urban areas.

The children's educational need in this area is for consumer education, for training in differentiating between needs and wants and in delaying their educated decision to buy before the money is saved. There are many everday opportune situations for children to experience all aspects of money management.

Schools do respond by providing experiences in all the above areas. There are many fine resources available from the Saskatchewan Consumer Affairs.

In summary, there are common factors uniting the children of urban and rural residence in Saskatchewan. Using the combined resources of schools and community ingenuity challenges such as declining enrolments can become advantageous to all our children.

The differences between the educational needs of rural and urban children tend to be non-academic. Basic communication skills, life skills and vocation skills are necessary everywhere. Rather the differences lie in what each group values.

These differences offer new learning opportunities for both groups and provide the richness to our Saskatchewan fabric.

Children in Groups due to Socioeconomic Level

Children are also affected by the income level of their family. There are poor children and rich children. Some poor children are white, native and from two parent families or single parent families. Rich children in Saskatchewan are usually from white families and usually from two parent families.

The response to being poor may be to move to another residence and seek new opportunities. While migration from province to province is not a factor influencing the educational needs of our children, frequent moving from urban to rural areas and the small but evident group of children from other nations in Saskatchewan have particular needs.

In this section, we will describe the life of a poor child (whether native or white) and a child who moves frequently (whether native or white). The educational needs of new Canadians are related to the culture and language of their home. Thus, that discussion will occur under the section

entitled Children in Their Homes. Also, poverty for children in Saskatchewan is related to single parents but the single parent families will also be addressed in the above mentioned section.

A discussion of the needs of a rich child will conclude this section.

Poor children in Saskatchewan are numerous, could live with a female parent, could live in a rural or small urban area, could be in a large family, need not be Indian. Their educational needs are parental and community involvement, basic skills, career development and most important a sense of being able to control their economic life.

There are 376,000 people in Saskatchewan who are defined as part of the labour force. This represents 61.1% of the population fifteen years of age and over. 365,000 people are employed, 11,000 are unemployed. Of this 365,000, 299,368 incomes were reported in 1978 on Taxable Returns for Saskatchewan of which the average income is $16,004 per year (Saskatchewan Bureau of Statistics, Economic Review, 1981).

How is poor defined? The 1982 Statistics Canada low-income cutoffs vary according to size of residence and of family. It varies from $5,307 for a single person in the rural area to $21,615 for a family of seven or more in an urban area between 100,000 and 499,999 people (National Council on Welfare (NCW), January 1982). The cut-offs suggested by the Canadian Council on Social Development (CCSD) and the 1970 Senate Committee on Poverty are more generous.

There were 6,759,373 Canadian children in 1970 of whom 1,657,017 of them were poor (24.5%). The prairies had slightly more than 10% of the poor children in Canada in 1970-1975 (NCW, 1975).

According to the 1982 NHC publication, Poverty in Canada, 10.9% of the families in Saskatchewan are poor, representing 113,100 of the 639,000

poor families in Canada. So we still have at least 10% of our children living in poverty, probably more since the poorer families have four or more children.

In 1970, 114,081 Saskatchewan children were poor. This represented 38.4% of the Saskatchewan children under the age of sixteen (NCW, 1975). In rural Saskatchewan in 1970 there were 78,974 children or 53.6% of the total number of rural children who were poor. Now 20% of the families in the rural areas are poor (NCW, 1982).

Since that time, the shift between rural and urban areas has finished. However, since that time new low income cutoffs have been established and the incidence of poverty, as newly defined, would be higher.

Single people (particularly over age 70 - 50%, unemployed - 50%, under 24 - 33%) are more vulnerable to poverty than families. Rural and small urban people are also more vulnerable (20% and 10% respectively). Saskatchewan rural families in poverty in 1971 was under 35.2% not including persons living on Indian Reserves (Saskatchewan Health, 1980-1981).

Single women are slightly poorer than single men, 38.1% and 22.9% respectively. However, single women with children are usually quite poor. 45% of all households headed by single women are designated as poor (NCW, 1982). In households headed by single men, only 7% are poor (NCW, 1982).

The risk of poverty for families with four or more children is 26.1% while for three children it is 13.8% and for two children it is 12.4% (NCW, 1982).

When comparing poor families with non-poor families across Canada, 17.7% of the poor live on the prairies while 16.9% of the non-poor live on the prairies (NCW, 1982).

Finally, by income (up to $12,803), the bottom 20% of the families in

Canada use 5.9% of the total family income for Canada. In contrast, the top earners (over $37,181) use 38.5% of the total family income, six and a half times the poor group's share.

How are these factors reflected in the educational needs of poor children?

The aspirations of these children regardless of their intelligence may be lower (68.3% of the high mental ability working class child did not complete Grade 13 and only 33% of those who did went to university) (NCW, 1975, p.17). They need to be convinced that once poor does not always mean poor. One way to become less poor is to go to school as family income is related to level of education (NCW, 1975).

These children are often desperately interested in earning money and thus will risk foregoing an education to do so.

The first educational need of these children is to become convinced about the value of education and its economic usefulness.

Learning to delay gratification now in order to reap more fruitful benefits later would be a value well worth trying to develop in these children. Perhaps all children would profit from such a training.

Twice the proportion of poor children had fallen behind in school by age fifteen as non-poor children, 33% and 18% respectively. Those who had reached grade 9 by age fifteen of non-poor children in two parent, female head and male head families is 82%, 80% and 74% respectively. For poor children the numbers are 67.8%, 68.3% and 56.4% respectively. The mother present in both two parent and female headed families seems to have a greater influence than only the father in school performance. 82% and 80% of the non-poor and 67.68% of the poor families with at least a mother were in grade 9 or more by age fifteen, while only 74% of the non-

poor and 56.4% of the poor children in only male headed families were.

Why does this occur?

First, poor children may be hungry when they arrive at school. Certainly the nutritional adequacy of the mother's diet during pregnancy is in question. Often habits of regular sleep and routines do not exist at home.

Secondly, in the housing conditions in which the poor must live, there is little space or a quiet place conducive to learning in our conventional notion. In addition, illness spreads rapidly in close quarters. Poor children are forever trying to catch up in schools.

Thirdly, it is in school that children on a daily basis must face the fact they are poor. Seeing what looks like affluent classmates drives them harder towards money, so, soon they can alleviate the pain. It also tempts them to avoid school and the pain, thus absenteeism can be a form of avoidance and only serve to put them behind.

What can the school do?

Be sure the child that is failed is not just cranky, restless, hungry and inattentive due to nutritional deficiency and health practice.

Be sure teachers are able to draw out the best from these children.

Be sure that the type of methods used do not require a child to continually catch up if absent. Learning Centres or independent learning modules, perhaps are forms of individualized learning which children can stop and start at anytime.

Provide ways these children can learn and earn. If school libraries were open for longer hours and the learning was portable and individualized, perhaps the students could work and then come to school to learn. Correspondence Courses with exams immediately after completion could provide a

way of learning and earning.

Small classes, a buddy system and close faculty control are all ways schools must provide for the development of new aspiration in life. It is here that only the model of someone the child can accept as his mentor will have an effect. The Big Brother concept would be most useful.

The argument concerning the role of the teacher as an educator or social service agent is critical in the lives of poor children.

Teachers need time to meet the needs of these children for their psychological state and level of aspiration directs their educational needs (Weininger, 1975). Contrary to Weininger, many teachers are willing and able to act as empathetic mentors and models provided they are given half a chance to do an adequate job. It takes energy to work with restless cranky children, it takes energy to work with discouraged rebellious youth - so teachers need a few youngsters to work with, adequate resources and time to prepare the kind of education that would excite and convince these youngsters that life has much to offer and they are indeed most needed members of society.

A rather useful exercise would be to match the cost benefit of providing the school system with funds to actualize programs for poor children with the costs of welfare and of the results of trying to avoid the pain of being poor - crime, drug abuse, alcohol misuse, etc. Over time the taxpayer would be the beneficiary economically and socially.

Poor children usually come from families who have been poor for a long time. Being convinced about the value of education is not accomplished in a semester, a year or perhaps even the school life of the child. Perhaps the best hope is that the first generation of poor children to be "helped" may pass on to their children that life is not quite so

predetermined and that they can have some control over their economic life.

The school cannot accomplish anything if it works in a vacuum. However difficult, parents must be involved in the decision making of their children. Indeed if they are able to become directly involved on a daily basis the children blossom. In the United States during the 60's-70's there were numerous programs for the War on Poverty. The only early child programs 0=8 years of age that had any lasting effects involved parents. Indeed a 1977 Lasting Effects After Preschool study is now able to report results of the 60's projects from a longitudinal viewpoint. The results are: there are fewer children in costly special education programs, fewer children failing and more children have a better performance level as reflected in math and I.Q. scores up to age thirteen. Finally, the achievement correlation of both mother and child has been influenced.

Herman (no. 172) provides many practical and usable ways to involve parents in the school.

Goldberg, reported in Weininger (1975), suggests a community focus for any programs dealing with poor children.

Some ideas are: school-home preschool programs implemented by community families, primary programs designed to provide all the sensory motor and language development experiences which form a foundation which enables a child to learn, more male teachers who understand all the dimensions of the male model they provide, programs which emphasize the potential of girls as well as boys.

In Saskatchewan the Community School concept is a recent innovation and apparently a most viable alternative school. These schools will be examined in one of the subprojects of the Minister's Advisory Committee for the

Curriculum and Instruction Review.

Finally, Chase, 1980 in Passow (1982), seems to sum up the implications for the schools. His comments reflect the consensus in many studies (Herman, 1970) (Weininger, 1975).

Schools must:

- form partnerships in order to collaborate with other community agencies and organizations.
- be active in involving parents in all facets of local school education.
- offer new types of schools, for example, community schools, afternoon school, correspondence schools.
- extend in-school opportunities for all forms of early childhood education - infants to preschool, day care centres to drop-in centres.
- teach basic skills
- use appropriate multicultural and multilinguistic programs.
- attend to the special needs of the poor and handicapped child.
- treat the gifted poor children as a vital investment in the life of their community.
- use technology to personalize education.

The reason parents and children of poor families must be reinvolved in education in order to produce results is related to the community spirit so essential in a rural lifestyle.

Poverty erodes the sense of control over one's life and trust in the essential goodness of nature and life.

Poor people are essentially lonely aliens in their own society. Through involving them in increasing their chances of taking advantage of opportunities for them and their children, using their own vital ideas about their own needs, only then will they risk becoming involved in life. If this reentry is too painful or threatening, it will be firmly rejected.

Just adding more resources will not affect the poor child - it is the band-aid approach. Rather an indepth development built upon trust and success in society will over time help the child to use his unique innate abilities and valuable life experiences in order to develop into a satisfied, competent, contributing member of society.

> Saskatchewan mobile children experience academic frustration, and social and emotional isolation. They need close interpersonal relationships and support, and individual academic programs in order to experience success.

One response to being poor is trying to find another residence in order to succeed.

Children in families who move to a secure planned situation may experience adjustment difficulty. Poor children have to face the more traumatic uncertainty of their family's ability to succeed in the new environment. Will dad find a job? Will I be the only poor child in school? Will we find a house?

Children whose families found their economic situation no better of necessity were forced to relocate. Thus,the child moves again.

The number of migrant children in Saskatchewan may be defined in three ways.

In two of these categories, the numbers are small and not statistically significant however important as a minority. These categories are interprovincial and international migration.

Elsewhere in this paper interprovincial migration has been discussed.

The international migration gains of children from other countries is beginning to have an effect upon some schools as these children's needs become evident. The educational needs of children from Vietnam and Chile,

our most recent immigrants, are largely related to the language and culture of their homes and so will be discussed in that section.

The third category is the migration from school to school either within the urban or rural areas or between the urban and rural areas.

Recent economic changes producing towns in decline to "boom towns" have to some extent been a factor which affects the children of these urban families. Absenteeism, the various methods of teaching the same skills and the psychological effects of relocation all affect the educational needs of children.

While rural families are relatively stable, some moving occurs from rural area to rural area, from the farms and non-farming rural communties.

In Saskatchewan during the 1970's, we have experienced a population shift from rural to urban areas. The effect upon the enrolment of children has been to equalize the numbers of rural and urban children. The shift from white rural Saskatchewan to urban Saskatchewan is essentially over.

However, in our native population there are many patterns which affect the educational needs of the native children.

The report uses the term native people due to the multitude of definitions concerning Status, Non Status, Band Indian, Metis or aboriginal people. This report will not use statistics unless a definition can be included for it seems there are no reports concerning population and residence with which the generally native community agree. These reports originate from both native and non-native sources.

Each year in some of the urban centres there is a substantial change in enrolment throughout the year.

In a study currently in progress, a sample of 100 Division III and IV students were interviewed. Eighty-seven of these students are white,

thirteen are native. More than one-third of these students had attended more than four schools due to moving. Of this one-third, 53% of the natives and 30% of the non-natives had moved more than four times. The reasons for moving were more academic than personal. 28% had dropped out more than once in their school life.

Steedman, 1979, as she explores the reality of international migrants, mentions two ideas of use in Saskatchewan. She states that language and culture are crucial factors in the education of migrant children. Further she suggests that rather than attempting to assimilate these children into the school system, that schools could be building upon the linguistic and cultural pluralism in order to meet the educational needs of these children.

In Saskatchewan as children move from school to school, the alienation and isolation occurs.

Schools could counteract this alienation by providing intensive, support cultural orientation.

The community is crucial in providing a pluralistic cultural flavour to the school setting. A buddy system using community volunteers or paid workers may provide some cultural support in the school.

Further schools need to speak the language of these children academically, socially and linguistically. While the language of our natives may vary slightly in dialect, their level of competence in English must be considered. Perhaps these children simply do not understand the words teachers use and are not able to express their ideas. More oral assignments, interviews, use of visual aids may help to address this concern.

Academically the educational needs of children are for an individualized program made up of short modules that can begin when they arrive and conclude when they leave. If other schools are attended the portability of the indi-

vidualized program is important so the program should be transferred. These programs should capitalize upon the cultural background of the student and be highly audio-visual in order that the language is understood.

The implications of such ideas for the schools mean more teachers who know and respect the culture and are accepted members of the migrant's culture, a reorganization of the basics into manageable modules and once again, time to spend with a few students to develop relationships thus counteracting isolation and alienation. When children are in attendance the school should be open for longer hours. If the culture stresses cyclical workstyle then the school needs to respond by being available.

In summary, the migrant children who move in and out of our school systems require individual attention so they too can become useful members of our pluralistic society. Surely there is room for different and unique contributions.

Rich children may experience isolation, and an unrealistic view of the world. They need challenges in school and association with exciting service oriented projects.

Of all the literature, the lives of rich children is least described, their educational needs are not explored and the implications for schools are least delineated.

Rich means children in families who earn on an average of $38,000.

Based on interviews with teachers and students in affluent areas of cities and our rural communities, following is some food for thought.

If children in rich families are left alone due to careers or community volunteer work, then of course they experience the same difficulties a latch key child may have. The reactions of children vary due to personality.

Again, how the family handles the situation makes all the difference.

From these models some children could learn to be dynamic, productive, caring, conscientious contributors to society. Conversely, the children could question the value of children, themselves in particular, resent the lack of perceived concern and thus perhaps develop into self-protecting uncaring citizens.

The child in a rich family may be used to alot of material goods and money. Finding a balance between caring for personal property or the property of others and using materials as a measure of one's worth may become an issue. The "throw away" society cliche stems from trying to establish such a balance. On one hand an overemphasis concerning the material things in life could lead to niggardliness in contrast to generosity. An overemphasis upon using your material, sharing your possessions, being generous, may degenerate into abusing and using anyone's possessions because materialism is not important. It is the rich child rather than the middle income or poor child who has enough materials to even face this issue.

The schools face this issue in vandalism or the selfish waste of materials.

Children from rich families are often treated to the "better things in life", therefore, to motivate a child and capture their attention is increasingly difficult. A trip to mail a letter though rich in experience pales in light of the child's recent trip to Disneyland. A filmstrip, homemade teacher aid, may not motivate the child who has just come to school from using a home computer.

It is not necessary to compete with the luxuries in our society only to be aware that rich children have a perspective which differs

as does the perspective of the poor child, and that both groups have educational needs.

The implications for the school are to provide once again the kinds of challenging projects which personally involve these children in "real" life perhaps service oriented experiences. If these children as well as their parents can become involved in the school then their needs may be met.

Children in Groups Due to Innate Differences

The final section in Children as Part of Specific Groups will consider children in groups due to innate differences. This paper will address the educational needs of children who are disabled, who are gifted and who are hospitalized.

This paper will not consider supposed racial differences due to innate qualities. Rather, as mentioned before, these differences will be treated as part of the culture in the home.

Some differences which appear innate have been caused after birth. For the purpose of including as many different specific groups in this paper, children who are disabled due to accidents, due to emotional and mental difficulties or due to environmental or developmental factors will be included. For whatever reason the child is unique there may be specific educational needs and implications for the school.

Children with disabilities are not all identified, need to become part of our total society, need extended service particularly in rural areas, to specific groups and for specific disabilities, through school, community involvement and effective communication.

Children with Disabilities

From the Saskatchewan Task Force on Rehabilitation, 1980, p.74, 1.8%

of the under fifteen population is physically disabled. This is not categorized into minor and moderately disabled. These are children "who experience limitation in their major activity" (Saskatchewan Task Force in Rehabilitation, 1980). There are 204,000 school age children in the province. 1.8% is 2,040 children with physical handicaps alone. If 10% of the provinces' children are handicapped or 20,400, where are they?

In schools in 1980 - 1981, 139 orthopedically disabled school age children were served and 248 multiple handicapped (of whom a portion would be physically handicapped) children (Saskatchewan Education, 1979-1980). The total number served for all kinds of handicaps is 2,760.

From this one example of one type of one disability, taking into account all the variables listed below and more, there appears to be a discrepancy concerning the identification of the funding for programs for children with all kinds of disabilities.

Perhaps the school definition of physically or orthopedically handicapped differs so greatly from the Task Force's there is no relationship between the words. Perhaps some of the chronically ill are also physically handicapped. Perhaps some children who according to the definition "experience limitation in their major activity" do not go to school, or at the other end of the continuum, do not need any services in schools. It is hard to imagine those who are disabled in their "major activity" would not need some service in school, for example, wheel chair elevators, tape recorders, transportation, tutoring.

There may be quite a few children who may take longer to complete school due to their physical energy, susceptibility to illness, surgery and complications.

In Saskatchewan Education, 1980-1981, homebound educational services

(for example, home to school telephone hookups) are listed which could serve those who are not in schools. Also, if the school needs architectural modifications or the child requires transportation, it is listed in services.

To further complicate the identification issue the Task Force on Mental Health in Saskatchewan, May 1981, calculates that if 12% (CELDIC) of the population of sixteen and under (350,000) have learning and emotional problems then there are 40,000 children who need interim or long term service (Mental Health Association of Saskatchewan, 1981).

Where are the children?

We do miss 4% of our population in the attendance of children in schools - perhaps that is where these children are?

However, are these children in regular classrooms but <u>without</u> attention and <u>without</u> having their special needs met?

Of the 2,760 school age children being served in Saskatchewan their disabilities are classified in these ways: communication handicap, educational handicap, physical handicap and severe handicap. These are not necessarily labels but rather serve to organize needs and consultancies from the provincial level.

Physically handicapped children are those who are visually impaired, orthopedically handicapped or have chronic health problems.

Educationally handicapped children are learning disabled, educable mentally retarded and socially/emotionally handicapped.

Children with a communication handicap have a speech or language handicap due to developmental or pathological causes (neurological, physical or sensory problem). Many of these children are deaf or are hearing impaired and some children have limited verbal skills.

These disabilities are organized around the funds available

for services. There are two major programs - low cost and high cost. The term low cost applies to 3% of Division I, II and III students (Saskatchewan Education, 1980) and the use of the fund is a local decision. Within the high cost program there are three levels of funding based on the severity of the child's handicap and on the child's educational needs. For example, for children with hearing and visual disabilities, Level I funding goes to children who are hearing impaired and visually impaired while Level II goes to deaf and blind children. The children who receive Level III could not adequately benefit from the instructional techniques provided in conventional programs for the physically or mentally handicapped.

The children with emotional problems as part of another disability or separate, who are not identified and served by Saskatchewan Education are caught among existing services. Only 15.5% of those receiving psychiatric services are under twenty, while 34.7% of our population is 0 - 19 while Level III provides for preschool handicapped children.

What are the educational needs of handicapped children?

They are the same as regular children. All children need skills to communicate, skills to improve their quality of life and skills for production (Noor, 1981).

All of these skills are used within our society. Therefore, one of the specific educational needs of the disabled is to be an integral part of this society. So much has been written concerning the right of these children to become accepted, respected and useful members in every life situation that finally there appears to be a gradual acceptance of this principal.

Who knows, now that society is beginning to accept people who are

different in this way, perhaps other differences in race, religion, sex and ideas will also be viewed as a positive enriching part of Saskatchewan. The disabled children in their struggle may yet be most significant contributors to society.

Another specific need of these children is to be equipped with exactly what is needed to reduce the debilitating effect of their handicap.

Further, in order to become integrated in our classes these children need to become part of the regular small classroom in which the teacher has time to prepare an individual program specifically designed to this child. The teacher needs time to prepare these programs. The child in this context will be afforded the same opportunity as each class member to develop many interpersonal relationships thus learning to deal with people within the limitation of the disability. Perhaps then children with disabilities will not have to fight psychological difficulties due to loneliness, rejections and fear which can be reflected in bitterness, self pity and unhappiness. Forming healthy, meaningful relationships is the essence of care for the socially and emotionally handicapped.

What can the schools do?

The school can place every child with a disability who can profit from the regular classroom, gradually, with careful planning, with effective communication, into the regular small classroom.

The school can become a mini clearinghouse for information concerning the disabilities of the children in their school. Parents need new information, and other parents and children need background material. Often agencies are too busy serving children to provide information about new research.

The school can involve parents and all community members and other

students in the everyday lives of all the disabled in the school and the community.

Is the school a social agent? Are these our responsibilities? What choice is there?

In order to meet the academic, vocational, personal and social needs of these children - and these are all educational needs - then the school must arrange the children's environment as much as possible so they can learn to take advantage of what the schools offer.

Therefore, yes, the school needs to try to desensitize community reaction to disabled children through modelling in the school and activities described above.

In Nihira et al, 1981, the following characteristics in the home are essential to the adjustment of the child in school. To learn in school, the child needs the following from home: a) harmony and quality of parenting (acceptance/love, concern, and restrictiveness/central involvement, b) educational and cognitive stimulation, c) emotional support for learning, and d) cohesiveness or lack of conflict, and expressiveness of family members.

Therefore, it is crucial that the home and school become close partners in the education of disabled children.

Finally, schools and health organizations, private and public agencies need to cooperate with each other to maximize the effectiveness of the available service to students and to identify the children of individual communities who are in need. An up to date catalogue of available services in the community from all agencies and procedure concerning their use is a necessity.

In Saskatchewan there are gifted children who are disabled physically,

there are retarded and gifted rural children, there are retarded and gifted native children, there are gifted, physically disabled, hearing impaired children in Northern Saskatchewan, there are visually handicapped French children, there are Division IV learning disabled, gifted or hearing impaired children. What attention do they need?

Cole in Rural Educator, 1981, cites four reasons that there are problems in providing services to exceptional students in rural areas. Exceptionality is defined as mental retardation, learning disabilities, behavior disorders, speech and language disorders, hearing impaired, visually impaired, physically handicapped, multiple handicapped, gifted and talented.

They are: funding educators, involving the parents and community, money, and providing services. One solution he cites involves extra housing and expenses to induce special educators trained in all specialties to teach in heterogeneous classrooms.

Other solutions revolve around money and resource personnel so mobile services can be provided at school or in the home. Substitute teachers teach in the classroom while the special educator works with the teacher, parent and child using mobile services. The special educator travels from school to school on a regular basis in a small area.

Only a very personal, one to one search, identification, program development, supervision and assessment will result in truly integrating the disabled child.

Approximately 800 of the 4,000 gifted children are being served in a variety of ways in Saskatchewan schools.

Gifted Children

The First Saskatchewan Conference on the Education of the Gifted was

held May 6, 7 and 8, 1982. At that conference it was estimated there are 4,000 gifted children in Saskatchewan. Currently we are serving approximately 800 gifted children across the province in a variety of ways.

The programs range from back to back scheduling in schools so children no matter the age can take for example math with their appropriate level, go to enrichment centres which transport children for group experiences based on interest.

Still the most resisted kind of program for gifted children is acceleration. Acceleration is the most economical and most supported program in the research literature. It provides children with the opportunity for continuous progress and each step is rewarded. In our society doing it faster and better is success! There is so much to learn why are we afraid that the child will go through school too fast - there will always be more.

The basis to the resistance is not parents, rather, some educators are reluctant to provide more for children who have so much anyway. They are still committed to equal education not equal opportunity for education and (there is a big difference) and resent the "arrogance" of parents who identify their children as gifted, thus somehow intimating that all school is boring!

The educational needs for gifted children are identification, program development and program evaluation. These children are so capable of developing their own programs and doing evaluation, it is relatively simple to provide these services. Of course time is needed, access to resources is needed and this kind of planning begins before the child is turned off.

The children themselves need challenge. The fear society has that these children will somehow become social recluses or intellectual snobs is based upon examples of people not truly gifted or people who have not been chal-

lenged early.

These children need all that schools and education has to offer but in more depth. In times of trauma they need the support and caring as do all children.

The implications for the schools are to involve your top 2-5% of every class in programs that are truly built upon the concept of continuous progress. All children require a program based on continuous progress. If by chance in the top 2-5% some children who are not gifted are included, does it matter? Better to err on the side of giving too much than to give too little. Perhaps some gifted children who are not identified due to underachievement will be missed for the time being. However, if you begin with Kindergarten and if these programs are rich and exciting, the underachiever will not be able to resist.

Another implication for schools is to offer support, encouragement and praise for the children who are talented in their particular field of endeavor be it academic, athletic or aesthetic. Who knows, inside that talented child there may be a gifted child!

It is through the strengths of the gifted that our society will be able to provide for the needs of all our citizens.

To waste this resource is to waste the future of Saskatchewan!

Children are frequently hospitalized for accidents. They need coordinate, medically appropriate education programs. Schools could provide leadership by establishing a communication system and individualized instruction and adequate funds.

Children in Hospitals

Children enter hospital for a variety of reasons. In fact, Saskatchewan Hospital Service Plan (SHSP) uses a National Listing of over 200 entries, for example, pneumonia, tonsils and adnoids. Therefore, only the barest facts are recorded for this paper. Accidents are the leading cause of hospitalization for school age children, (5-9) (10-14) 1,023 and 1,282 respectively for 1981-1982. The number of children in hospital for Regina and Saskatoon is the lowest, and the highest for villages and towns over 1,500. 5-9 and 10-14 year olds use the hospitals the least and 15-19, 0-1 and 1-4 groups use it the most. Registered Indian children and youth use a much higher level of hospital services per capita and for a longer time.

The most common reason for hospitalization of all children age 5-9 is upper respiratory infection found significantly higher for Registered Indians. For children 10-14 it is accidents. Indian children in this age group were particularly at risk for lacerations.

The above information comes from Russell (1980), Current Health Resources, Organization and Utilization.

Four out of ten children will remember their term in hospital as a period of illness and boredom (Kaye, 1978).

What are the educational needs for children in hospitals and the implications for schools?

Needs vary according to the length of stay.

These children, as all Saskatchewan children, need the same skills, the same meaningful relationships in order to be useful citizens. At this point in their lives due to circumstances, short term patients need programs closely coordinated with their home schools and systematically supervised. Reporting and recording procedures are crucial. These programs require adaptation due to the limits of the child.

Children who are long term patients in the hospital may become the total responsibility of the hospital and thus the same care and attention is necessary in preparing for teaching and assessing these children.

It is necessary that the school is creditable as perceived by the child in order for the child to learn.

To be remembered, is that children live not just exist in hospitals.

An additional educational need of both short and long term hospitalized children is adaptation because hospital confinement does have an effect.

The effect of even having school is of psychological benefit because school is familiar and perhaps represents security. Teachers often provide the only relationship for children in hospital. Rural children's parents are unable to come the great distances especially with families at home; in many urban families both parents work, and nurses need to attend to their duties.

This is another instance when the school acts as a social agent!

Another educational need is equipment for use in bed due to the reduced energy of the child, and short periods of schooling. However, Mauskopf, 1981, reports "Those patients who maintain a full program of instruction seem to be more socially aware, adept and happier with more defined future orientation than those who do not avail themselves of the program"(p.19). She works with children on dialysis.

Bored, unhappy children (are) more conscious of pain and discomfort (Maxwell, 1980).

Therefore, the child also requires a balance within his hospital experience.

What can a school do for hospitalized children?

In summary, the school within a hospital guided by the medical condition of the child needs to devote time and energy, resourceful empathetic staff, money and facilities toward providing a successful learning experience for these children. Individualized instruction, an adequate balance between rest and restricted recreation, stimulating projects, the kinds of criteria upon which all school programs are based should be in the schools for hospitalized children.

Children in Their Homes

The third major section describes children in the context of their home.

The first subsection will describe the differences in the composition of the homes in which children live. Next the differences among families due to culture and/or language difference are identified. Two examples, one from each of culture and language, focus on Native children and French children respectively. The third subsection in this section examines children from families at risk, specifically children of divorce, single parents and wards of the court. The final major subjects to be discussed are concerns within the families - runaways, teenage pregnancy and parenting, juvenile offenders, deaths among children including accidental and suicidal deaths, nutrition of children, day care for children, and television and children.

Bridges are provided between children in their homes and children in schools - the parent. Thus, the section will end with a brief discussion concerning parents and the school.

Most children in Saskatchewan live in families, two parent families and may live either in rural or urban centres. The child will usually have one sister or brother close in age.

Differences in Family Composition

A census family (Statistics Canada) is a husband and wife (with or without children who have never married, regardless of age) or a lone parent, regardless of marital status, with one or more children (who have

never married, regardless of age) living in the same dwelling (Wargen, 1979).

In 1976, close to 90% of all Canada's children under twenty-five years of age were living in families with two parents present and 98% of the 0-14 group were living in their families (Wargon, 1979).

One trend is that more children in the 15-24 year range are living at home probably due to the increase in real income of Canadian families and to the lengthening of their school life.

Families are having fewer children, usually two. More couples are postponing children or remaining childless. There are more lone parent families with older children usually due to divorce.

The nuclear and extended families make up the majority of families. However, Davids, 1980, describes the decrease between 1971 and 1976 of the extended families. 18.6% more people lived in private households without additional persons or related families. These additional persons are children-in-law, grandchildren, parents, parents-in-law, siblings, other kin.

He states, from Statistics Canada 1977:62, that it would be a great exaggeration to suggest that the family as we have known it is being replaced by other forms of marriage and household living (p.182). However emerging lifestyles are having effects on the types of families. Blended families occur when one or both spouses bring a child or children from other mariages. Families are also created by cohabiting couples, and by single adults who adopt or have children and choose to raise their children.

Lone parents are younger and usually poor.

The Atlantic provinces conform to the traditional image of the family while in Ontario and western Canada, some of the emerging family patterns

are evident. The Atlantic provinces also have the lowest average family income and the highest concentration of low income families. However, family income does not necessarily equate with family unhappiness.

In 1976 in Canada, 85% of the population is living in families.

In Saskatchewan in 1976, there were 115,550 urban families and 110,140 rural families. Urban is defined as the twelve cities in Saskatchewan over 5,000 in population. The total number of families is 225,690. That figure represents 85.1% of the population. During the early seventies there was a shift from rural to urban areas. Since the school population equalized in 1981, the families are probably still equally distributed between rural and urban areas.

Of the 85.1%, 79% of the families in 1976 were husband wife families. 6.1% were in other families leaving 44.9% of the population not in families.

The average family size was 3.5 similar to the Canadian rate. For 1981 the Saskatchewan fertility rate is 2.1. The average number of children per family in 1976 was two. Average household size was 2.96. 23.9% of the families had two children.

Defining urban as Statistics Canada does, areas with populations over 30,000, rural farm families have 2.1 children per family while non-farm had 1.7; the urban average is 1.5 (Statistics Canada, 1979, 93823 Table 12). There are more large families in the rural area, however, many will have two and under.

What do these statistics tell us about the educational needs of Saskatchewan children?

First, it tells us most children come from nuclear families with all its advantages and disadvantages. Families are common in Saskatchewan.

It tells us that children without two parents will be very much aware of the facts.

It tells us that with only one brother or sister, the interpersonal development of the child will be different from larger extended families of thirty to forty years ago - when we were children!

Since the family is so much a part of the child's life, the school must take into account the input from each child's family as it works with each child.

What does the home contribute that is necessary for the child to take advantage of the school experience?

The Ministry of Health and Social Welfare of Canada held a joint symposium on November 7, 1980 entitled The Family; School of the Future. The title itself describes the contribution of the family - it prepares children to take their place in the future. The purpose of the symposium was "to demonstrate the importance of the stability of family life " (p.1) because there is an "increase of numbers of children living at the fringe of the educational system" (p.1)(Health and Social Welfare, 1980).

More specifically, the family contributes to a child's life in these ways. As a child grows three stages emerge: a period of physical and psychological reinforcement, a period for the acquisition of lifestyle and finally, a period in which there is active adaptation, through involvement and engagement, to the surrounding world.

During each period the child is subjected to some degree of disappointment, powerlessness, fear of the unknown.

The function of the family is to model the stability of their interpersonal, affectionate relationships and strategies of coping with life. Through such modelling the children gain a security due to their knowledge

of interpersonal relationships, a sense of responsibility due to the affection apparent in these relationships and then as they are ready, they assume the responsibility for their own identity. They practice what they have seen modelled to them adapting it to new situations in order to be a creative being for a better future.

The reason only the home can do this is a process sometimes called bonding. It is bonding in early life that permits a child to transfer what he sees in his family to what he does himself.

Perhaps this is why older when adopted children or children of a different race within a family are unable to trust, to transfer, to imitate and later to adapt family lifestyle with ease. The conflict and resultant stressful insecurity due to no bond is reflected in many social situations.

When the child is expected to act in a particular manner there is no underlying almost innate or at least intuitive way to try. The child has not been able to absorb this information.

In school it is assumed that children know how to act in certain situations. Even in a kindergarten or preschool, it is taken for granted that the model of the home has been absorbed and further, that the child is confident and secure in this model. The insecurity and stress of not knowing how to act and being unable to learn how to act must surely be a terrible condition in which to exist.

This security a family models is first imitated, then practised until it becomes a part of the child, and later is reassessed and adapted becoming the child now adult.

In this security rests the seeds of a competent child and adult. This security frees the child to learn thus the school in order to teach must be provided with children who are secure.

Secure? In what ways?

Secure that there are things they can do - "Hey, mom, watch me!".

Secure that they can learn to do things - "Read it again".

Secure that they will likely be liked - "Hi, I'm Jill, want to play".

Secure that change is positive - "Now I can reach the cupboard".

Secure that mistakes happen, for example, things are broken on purpose or accidentally without the loss of love - "I lied, I hid my crusts".

It is a secure child that is free to learn. Unless the child is freed from fear, lack of confidence - insecurity, they are of necessity turning all their energy upon holding themselves together, suspicious of every happening.

Thus is the reason that teachers have no choice in becoming a social service agent. If the home is unable to provide the security that enables a child to learn we simply cannot do the job!

In summary, since the statistics described how numerous in Saskatchewan families are, this paper has described their importance.

The next fact related to the educational needs of children is the awareness of a lone parent's child which is discussed in a subsequent section.

The final subject to be discussed is the number of children in Saskatchewan families and the effect upon their educational needs.

Gilby, 1981, describes the development of the child's perception of family. By grade two children have an established definition of a typical family - a nuclear one - two parents with children. A family must be in contact and love each other.

Rodgers(1981) using the information from Glick's work in the United States, finds that in the two child family the children's ages in the 60's and 70's are becoming closer together, 5.6 and 2.4 respectively (p.729).

Further, these two children now just over two years apart are being parented by slightly younger mothers (23.9), the 80 year average mothers (24.7) and younger fathers (24.1). The fathers of these fathers had their first child at the age of (26.5) which is slightly above the 80 year average (26.1) for Canadian males.

Here we have two children, younger parents whose model of parenting was received from perhaps slightly more mature people.

What effect does this have on the educational needs of the children in school?

With smaller families the child may have more material wealth and the ideas concerning the education of richer children may apply.

If the child has a brother or sister close in age, mom and dad may be back into a career sooner and the children may or may not experience the loneliness of a latch key child.

Perhaps the most significant factor related to two closely aged children related to the school is the interrelationship between the children, between male parent and child, between female parent and child, and among parents and children. The whole complexity is complicated when sex identification is added.

In a nuclear family due to the fewer members, the relationships become more visible, more noticeable and evident, thus perhaps more intense. Sometimes it appears that too much energy is funneled into the significance of every little interaction in the home, however, sometimes with fewer people to which to relate there is an alienation from the family circle or the circle is simply not there. The search is for a balance.

The school needs to be aware of the kinds of relationships that occur

in the home. Some of the above named interactions result in intense competition or withdrawal from the family toward other satisfying interactions among peers in T.V. or in activity.

In larger families when you did not agree with mom or dad there were others to go to for a listening ear and support. Now with only one sibling who could get "points" with mom or dad by not siding with you there is more intensity.

In some cases the school has to help children relax about life's stages and learn to roll with the punches. In this situation the need for success becomes paramount in the list of educational needs.

In some instances schools need to reinvolve the students in the consequences of their behavior in order that they become aware of the value of interpersonal relationships.

Once again this is not teaching 2 X 2 but it is teaching children how to become healthy individuals free to contribute. Often the home is able to buffet its children from the intensity of close living conditions and personal relationships. Then the school's role is to reinforce the home by modelling like behavior in school. This behavior, however, could be the model from which an uninvolved child may learn.

The implications for the school are simple and straightforward.

Class size must be sufficiently small so the teachers can be either a complement or supplement to the home in order to free the child to learn.

Teachers and all school personnel need sufficient time to prepare motivating educational experiences based on the development of interpersonal relationships.

Children need new or reinforcing training in order to learn how to

develop relationships.

Heiss, 1977, says the person's education and the education of their father to some degree are factors in accepting attitudes about families, particularly if the acceptance is rewarding.

It appears schools do make a difference.

Schools and parents must be mutually involved in the goals of their child's local personal educational experience. Thus children will become acquainted with the world of work and parents will become a part of the community within the school.

Schools could include as part of every high school curriculum supervised experience with younger children. Now there are no little brothers and sisters to see being raised by mom and dad. Sometimes there is only mom or dad thus the blending is not available for imitation then adaptation.

It is to the school's advantage to prepare for its own future. By preparing youngsters today to find families exciting and rewarding and to be able to build strong, healthy, nurturing relationships, schools insure its own bright future.

Saskatchewan languages are English, German, Ukrainian, Native and French. Most children speak English but have contact with at least one other language. The cultural groups in order of size are British, Ukrainian, German, French and Native

Differences in Culture and/or Language

In Saskatchewan today among educators there rages a discussion concerning whether culture and language are so interrelated that they cannot be discussed separately or that language or culture are distinct and need to be addressed separately.

Beneath that discussion there seems to be a number of issues of concern related to program development.

If the focus is just on language will that mean only the French language since there is federal money to develop programs? Will the Ukrainian, German languages be addressed?

If the focus is just on language what happens to the language setting, the culture of which is such a beautiful part?

If the focus is just on culture will it be the Native population whether Metis, Band, Reserve, Status, Cree, Blackfoot? What about the French culture, the Hutterite culture, the Scandinavian culture, the Polish, Ukrainian, Romanian cultures in Saskatchewan?

If the focus is just on culture what about the language of the Indians and the dialects and English which of course affects school children?

If culture and language are addressed together will that neutralize the effect of the essential differences between groups of people who essentially want to assimilate their culture into the mainstream or groups of people who wish to assimilate their language into the mainstream? Also, there are those who only want to be left alone to do their own thing with the tax money!

What are the facts?

Statistics Canada reports (92-725).

In 1971, of 926,240 Saskatchewan people - 685,020 people's mother tongue was English. 633,385 people were born in Canada and 345,000 people were of English descent and 107,535 were of German descent. 31,795 people's mother tongue was French. 29,740 people were born in Canada and 26,960 people were of French desent. 169,170 people spoke the mother tongue of their ethnic group though 124,615 of these were born in Canada. The

ethnic groups and languages in order of greatest number were German, Ukrainian or of unknown ethnic origin. Of this group, those born outside Canada (44,555) by largest groups were German and Ukrainian, 28,500 of whom retained their language.

Another category is language most often spoken at home. In Saskatchewan in 1971 in a population of 926,020 people, 832,520 people spoke English at home. 15,923 spoke French. 66,755 spoke either German or Ukrainian at home. There were 26,010 Native Indians who spoke their mother tongue.

Other languages while in the minority by number but which affect children in their school and community are by order of largest number Polish, Norwegian, Hungarian, Dutch, Russian, Chinese and Swedish.

In urban and rural areas, English is the mother tongue for 386,955 and 298,965 people respectively. French is the mother tongue for 12,780 and 18,825 people respectively; Ukrainian for 53,385 and 28,195 people; German for 33,670 and 42,210 people; Indian and Eskimo for 4,005 and 22,010 people. Of the 22,010 - 20,520 were in non-rural areas. Among the other ethnic groups as listed at the end of the above paragraph, there is more people in the urban than rural areas. In the Polish, Russian, Hungarian and Dutch groups the ratio is 2:1, while for the Chinese it is 6:1 and for the Scandinavian it is almost 2:1.

In summary, most people use the English language, the country of their birth, followed in the minority by the German, Ukrainian, Native and French languages. The dominant culture by number is British followed by German, Ukrainian, Native and French.

The number of people using the Native language and culture is not adequately determined due to the numbers of Metis who use or do not use the language and the number of Indians who use or do not use the

language. Thus Native is listed prior to French due to this difficulty and since the numbers are similar.

Up to this point in this paper, the whole issue of the lives of native children has been avoided.

When conducting interviews for this paper, even the number of children there are commonly known as Indian children became an issue.

It appears that native children are, as children always are, caught in the middle and no one is doing anything to really help.

The parents of children, whether Indian, native or white, must have some control over the child's education.

This education must be basically compatible with the culture in terms of values and morals of the home from which the children come - native or white.

Education is designed to widen the horizons of children - native or white. For example in many schools computers will be used in the '80's.

Computer education though terribly threatening to some parents, is rapidly being accepted as a tool to use in the future. If the computer is not to abuse us, then we must gain control over it and use it as a tool.

Thus native children working within the community and with their parents need to be challenged using all the developmental principles, psychological techniques, cultural familiarity appropriate to each child as an individual.

It appears that due to economic conditions and patterns due to restrictive old laws, that parents are having difficulty determining just where and how their children should live. In urban areas with the hope of employment comes the disappointment of housing and uncomfortable city life. In rural areas, competition, family change disrupts life and the

spector of T.V. dreams ever beckons.

Yet the children suffer - or do they? As previously stated the home provides the basic security because it models relationships and affections. It provides ways of living which a child can imitate successfully. However, child abuse, alcoholism, unemployment, unsettled living conditions all wear away at the home's resilience in providing security and love, yet the bonding and modelling are there.

Some sources suggest that "child swiping" is the obvious step to curing child abuse and alcoholism (Imlach, 1978). What does this do to the modelling and bonding? What kind of model is abuse?

If both white and native homes provide what children need, thus the school should be able to do its job.

Perhaps in order to work together and widen the horizons of native and white youngsters it is time the basic tenets and how they are actualized in the cultures should be examined.

The Vichert Report, January 1981, calls for a "serious study", a full examination of the Indian and Metis culture by someone of the culture and involving the people themselves. Such a study would highlight characteristics which make this such a culture from which all children can learn.

It is estimated by NORDAT that there are 11% or 24,303 Treaty, Metis, Non-Status Indian children enrolled in schools. 10% entering the labour force are of native ancestry and in the next fifteen years this will increase to 15%. 11% of the schools in Saskatchewan have a population of over 50% native. Rural areas still have the largest numbers of students. Four cities have a native population between 5-20% in their schools. Enrolment by grade decreases significantly from kindergarten to grade twelve.

As of 1977, FSI estimates one-third of the Treaty Indians will live

off the reserve and by 2000 A.D., 50% will live off the reserve. The great shift has occurred so far into the south from reserves to Regina.

Due to unemployment many urban native children are poor. 50% of the men off reserves are employed, 35% of the women. 30.1% at the time of the interview were receiving social assitance. While Indian people are more than 10% of the total Saskatchewan population (NAND), they account for 40% of those below the poverty line representing 26,063 family households. However, there is some discrepancy in the initial 10% estimate, a figure of 62,500 is also being used.

In any case, many native children are poor and are in need of some educational changes.

The kind of changes depend upon the children's educational needs in relation to the culture of the home as interpreted by their communities and homes.

The Indian culture was interpreted to grade four children by Jim Ryder through games and glimpses into the past through stories and through crafts.

One basic ethic reflects sharing, cooperation and kinship. Is not that just what homes need to offer? Is not that what white homes also have to model?

This ethic is made a part of everyday living by encouraging extended family arrangements. Also, poverty and unemployment make collective living a necessity (Mooney, 1979). The ethic stresses the kinship attitude not living all together. The value of extended families is becoming more evident as the nuclear family shows the strain of its limited resources.

This family ethic is very much like the spirit of the community in our rural area. It is at the basis for the Indian people's request for local

control and involvement (Sealey, 1975) - such cooperation with all community organizations including the schools is heard all over Saskatchewan.

Another basic ethic Mr. V. Ryder relayed was taking care of each other. Families reach out to anyone in need.

Do unto others as you would have them do unto you is a principle upon which many homes are built. Community responsibility, socialism are often based around this ethic.

Another ethic involves the consequences to one's behavior particularly greed. Using Indian legends, Mr. Ryder told about what happens to an animal in nature.

The final ethic that Mr. Ryder described was the gift of the first born child to his grandparents to raise. From this tradition, old and young alike are truly enriched.

The implications for the school are that change is urgently needed. This paper cannot even touch the surface of possible alternatives

Aurelien Gill, 1975, has six ideas about how to include local control in the school. Decentralization would enable the Department to respond to requests, assure a clear line of involvement for all Indian organizations, build trust in order to implement local school control successfully, loan the services of resource personnel on request, re-appropriate funds by needs, and concentrate services toward the local level.

Bouvier (Saskatchewan Bulletin, October 31, 1979), says to employ natives as administrators, use affirmative action plans, incorporate non-biased native content into the curriculum, use native parents as advisors. McArthur echoed these same ideas (Saskatchewan Bulletin, October 31, 1979). Community schools are a beginning.

Basically there are three fundamental implications for the school.

Somehow, the school must be the result of the Indian people's sharing, co-operation and kinship as well as the product of the white person's sharing, co-operation and kinship.

Second, the Indian culture must be so much a part of the school that it can be modelled on a daily basis.

Finally, the school needs to become the family who cares for all children, teaching them as their own.

The next group of people who are interested in assimilating their culture into Saskatchewan is the French.

As stated previously, there are approximately 30,000 Francophones (people who are French) in Saskatchewan of whom approximately 25% or 6-7,000 are school aged children. These children are found in greater numbers in rural areas scattered over thirty communities. In Alberta and Manitoba the concentration of Francophones is in five to six larger communities.

The numbers of children being served in Type B or Immersion schools is 3,127 (1980-1981), 707 kindergarten children and 572 grade one children. In Core French programs seventh to twelfth graders plus some kindergarten to sixth graders are served. Type A programs known as the French Language Schools serve the language and cultural needs of Francophones in the province. There are five such schools and the number served is approximately 700. The Immersion or Type B program has experienced a 30% enrolment increase in 1981. 1982-1983 promises to serve more students (3,400) based on interest, particularly since the French language may be used as the language of instruction up to 100% of the time if desired in kindergarten and grade one. This increase is due primarily to the interest of Anglophones whose children take French. The number of these schools has grown from one to eleven in the Regina systems,

over the past 15 years in addition to one French Language School.

The Core program is "holding its own" in enrolment. This year, 1981-1982, the Core French Research Project is currently analyzing data from a survey of 3,000 administrators, teachers, children and parents to determine the needs of Core program students.

Francophones of the Cultural Committee for Saskatchewan are currently preparing information concerning the French Canadian culture as it applies to the French Language Schools in Saskatchewan.

What are the educational needs of these children?

Students taking a Core French Program only, will not become bilingual. Therefore, such an expectation is unrealistic. Core French is a good beginning for our province but it only whets the appetite. As parents and teachers realign their expectation , children will benefit and further enjoy their learning experience. The results of the Research Project will no doubt surface the specific needs.

As the number of children increase in the Immersion Programs, the needs of the students of the school are more akin to the regular school. Previously, children in French programs may have been from the upper middle class and those who remained in the program did not have particular difficulties. Now, children need teachers who instruct in French and are remedial teachers, tutors for the learning disabled, and teachers in Special Education areas. To date, few native children have been involved in Immersion programs although there has been an opportunity in the north.

Children need individual attention in all the above programs as they do in all school classes, therefore, small classes and preparation time is required.

Parents of children in these programs, particularly in the French

Language Schools, want to become more involved in the control of their schools. In order that the children become comfortable, knowledgeable and truly the French Canadian of Saskatchewan they need a rich cultural program. Some parents believe they can provide it.

Finally, children are given the right to access by the Saskatchewan Education Act (1978), Section 180-4. In practice, due to the type of access which is provided, parents must opt out of the programs for the sake of the all around comfort of the child. For example, it seems unlikely a parent of a kindergarten child would board on daily transport their one child to a school twenty to thirty miles away.

Implications for the school are to involve parents in the decision for their school, to use local resource personnel in order to enrich the program's cultural component, to provide small classes and to access program.

In addition, a general public relations program designed to clarify the variety and purposes of each program is needed in order that teachers, parents and children have realistic expectations.

Instruction in the French language not only provides our Saskatchewan children with an investment in the Canadian future, it enriches the dimensions of Saskatchewan mosaic.

Finally, a paper describing the lives of children would be remiss in omitting a brief discussion around the English culture.

The Saskatchewan English culture is as complex as the native and French cultures. Since so many are so much a part of this culture it is difficult to identify the underlying ethics.

Northrup Frye in his writing attributes many of our basic assumptions to the Christian ethics of the Bible (Frye, 1982).

Mixed with these concepts is a belief in the individualism of human

beings and in the balance each human finds between service and self satisfaction.

The theme of balance and everything in moderation is still another ethic of our culture.

The committment to individualism and the responsibility to free others to be themselves is the ethic upon which pluralism is based.

Humanism in its most basic state gives the responsibility of making the world a better place for man. Constrasting this with Christianity, man finds the wisdom to do this from God not from within himself.

The implications for the school are to protect each person's right to become a unique contributing member of society. In more practical terms it means individualizing instruction at times, grouping children at others, even searching for ways in which children can find a balance among a smorgasbord of experiences guided by a healthy foundation from home.

In the Vichert report and the Fine Arts Report there is ample evidence that the people of Saskatchewan desire a wide variety of Aesthetic experiences for their children. In Aesthetic Education and the Quality of Life many ideas are offered concerning the implimentation of programs (Curtis, 1981).

Another implication is that the school must be willing to become a social service agent in order to facilitate the growth of each child.

In all, the major implication for the school is to become centered upon people - the children.

Children are at risk in families due to divorce, in single parent families and as wards of the court.

Families at Risk

For some of our families certain conditions prevail which are potentially harmful to its members. In this paper the lives of children is our focal point. How each family handles these conditions determines if these conditions become crises. Economic, family, cultural and community resources, sources, information and support in part determine how the situations are handled. The philosophical and spiritual dimension of the people involved also determines the coping ability of families. There will be differences among children due to these conditions. Some are damaging so only the effects can be addressed to try to reduce the impact. Some are positive and from these experiences children can learn about relationships and life's conditions.

The search for the balance for each child is indeed a challenge.

Three conditions which can put children at risk are divorce, single parent families and being a ward of the court.

In Saskatchewan in 1979, 1,488 divorces were finalized. These divorces are the last step to which there may have been years of separation and turmoil. Before the separation there may have been years of family discord. On the other hand, it may have been sudden and rejection was the most trauma causing element. The increase in divorce from 1975 to 1979 is 35%. The age of females of divorce is 34.5 years and for males the age of divorce is 37.9 (Saskatchewan Health, 1980). In at least half the cases of divorce, children over the age of five are involved. Thus, the school must be aware of the situation.

A child in a divorce particularly prior to the event is going through a loss. During loss there are particular stages not unlike accepting and grieving over a death. A child is often alienated from other members of

the family and parent remaining because there is so much day to day instability in the home. The reactions are often either very intense or completely repressed. No one knows how the other may react at any given moment. Contact with the parent not in the home is also painful and starts the reactive cycle again.

As the initial trauma wears itself, then the child has to begin to accept the inevitable. At this time, even up to fourteen years of age, it is quite common for a child to believe with conviction that somehow the family will be reunited. Fed by T.V. and movies, the crushing blow of the "unhappy" ending for many children is carefully hidden.

Following the acceptance period (and this is not always a linear process for unpredictable regressions in the family stability are almost predictable) there is a process of rebuilding. It is painful and slow, but in some cases begins to become a happy experience. In some cases, it still begins, it must happen, but the whole tone is less than jubilant. Rather, the family begins to build around the loss, steadily filling in the hole that remains.

Children are a part of this building process. Many new facets of family relationships are explored. The parent may have new friends and the parent may now be working. The family needs to reorganize the home chores and responsibilities and to recreate the traditions in a different but satisfying manner. The family also attempts to reinstate former traditions and if found not too painful and threatening may be able to risk remembering just a little.

Whether the decision to divorce is mutual or not, these stages occur to a lesser or greater degree. Even if both parents try to protect the child from the trauma by remaining attentive, the rejection of the situation

is difficult to avoid.

Thus the needs of a child in school are many and varied. It depends upon how the divorce is handled at home and the relationships within the home as well as the personality of the child. How well the child liked school prior to the upset, how long the home discord has occurred, how much conflict arises over custody and visitation all influence the reactions.

Open communication and learning to live day to day is perhaps one need of the child. While not academic, children, unless freed from their own personal burden and guilt and unless given comfort and support, are not able to function at school.

Even then some children react differently under this stress. Some children will become scrupulously neat and tidy, setting most unattainable standards in order to try to be "good enough" so the other parent will come home. Some children will simply 'slop' through their work, expressing anger, resentment, self pity. Some children retreat into day dreams or become very sleepy. Some children become restless, inattentive, the class clown, in a desperate attempt for approval, thus dealing with the rejection. Academic work may or may not suffer.

Learning to live day to day without counting on a fantasy future is difficult for the child. Children need assurance that each day, though black for them, has some good in it somewhere. The world will not come to an end, they will not die if the family is broken.

Open communication with the home is also most important. The school needs to know exactly the limitations of visitation, custody rights, etc.

Currently joint custody is an option families are selecting. Such arrangements while difficult at first to organize at least superficially

weaken the blow of rejection.

Child kidnapping is also becoming more common thus there are legal concerns for the school.

Finally, in addition to the child's emotional and academic needs, there may be physical and social needs.

There may be physical reactions to the stress of divorce for children. Some children need to urinate more often, have stomach upsets, skin conditions and even their hair will fall out. Some children do not eat or sleep routinely. Socially the children could experience a wide variety of reactions. The child initially may reject the company and friendship of other children who have been through divorce. At that time they are resisting this condition thrust on them by the parents. Therefore, the children do not want to associate themselves with anything or anyone connected with divorce.

Other children may reject the child on advice from the parents. Still the children are punished by the stigma of the parents "failure" in marriage. The children themselves are often not pleasant to be around creating their own problems and thus it is easy for other children and parents to rationalize the rejection.

What are the school implications?

The most apparent implication is in the area of interpersonal relationships. Close, honest communication coupled with stability, support and affection goes a long way to assure the child that somewhere there is constancy in the world.

Reliable, comfortable routines, expectations and homework assignments again communicate to the child that school is where the world is steady.

Understanding, warmth, flexibility in standards, encouragement, opti-

mism give children hope for the future.

The school needs to be strong enough to support the children yet gentle enough to cradle them.

Again, the reactions of children are so contingent upon the situation. Divorce in some cases is the only alternative to "hell in the home" and thus the remaining parent and children almost celebrate. Often the reaction of the parent may be celebration but the child hurts, so the school is where the child vents or further represses feelings.

Parents try to fool themselves into believing children can adapt with few scars. The scars vary in intensity but they are there.

Legally, there are many implications for the school. Drake (1981) states "It takes planning to deal effectively with children of divorce" and he delineates nine areas for administrative consideration. They are: territorial rights - does the child belong in this district?; access to school records - does the non-custodial parent have rights?; school visits - is the non-custodial parent permitted to see, to visit, to take the child from school?; medical emergencies - to whom does the school turn?; financial responsibility - this is in relation to school needs for activities; surname - does the school insist upon the legal name?; retention - does this trauma result in retention?; confidentiality of records - who gets what?; school functions and activities - how does the school avoid intensifying the pain on Father's Day, etc.?

The final implication for the school leads into the discussion of the second condition which may put families at risk and that is - children in the single or lone parent home. This implication for the school has perhaps the most farreaching beneficial effect.

The school can offer a full, rich Family Life Course. This does not

mean sex education only.

This type of Family Life course is focused on the family.

It is in a Family Life course that children from single parent homes, from divorcing families or from homes in which there is a struggle to maintain a solid relationship (due to being poor, moving often, alcoholism or simply the changes in personal goals) can learn how to communicate, how to form relationships and the variety of ways there are to react to stress, everyday mistakes, crisis situations. In Family Life courses the values of family, children, a home and life can be learned perhaps for the first and only time.

This Family Life course needs to involve many members of the community from family counsellors to an investment broker.

It needs to involve practical work with real live children in day care or in the same (K-12) school. The parents, children and teachers all need to plan the course together. It needs to be as flexible as the needs require. Parents need home packets so those subjects which are delicate for that home can be taught in the privacy of their own home. The content can be as limited or expanded as the parent deems appropriate.

Family Life could be the most exciting course for youngsters in the curriculum for its content is concrete daily life. The youth are in the throws of finding their own lifestyle - what better place to use as a sounding board but a school.

Is Family Life academic? No, yet it may be the most academic course around. It is basic to living life and to being freed from the desperate search for identity in order to learn thus to be educated.

Several concerns converge upon the topic single or lone parent families - women in labour, women and poverty, rights of fathers. This

report focuses on children.

What are the facts?

In 1976, 56,160 people lived in single families in Saskatchewan. This represents 19,100 of the possible 225,685 families or 8.5% of all families. The national percentage is 9.8%. Of the 19,100 families, 12,100 (63%) lived in urban areas and 7,000 lived in non-farm rural and rural farm areas.

Of these 19,100 families, 3,550 or 18.5% are headed by a male; 15,550 families (81.5%) are headed by females.

53% of single parent families live below the Statistics Canada poverty line.

Of these,in December 1979, 15,550 female headed families, 5,284 female headed families or 73% are on Saskatchewan Assistance Plan (SAP). This represents 38.7% of the women on SAP. The reason for being single in descending order of frequency is separated, never married, divorced, widowed, unknown. Never married and separated women are in the age range to have school age children, 25 and 34 respectively.

Of the 15,550 female headed single parents, two in three or approximately 10,000 have incomes below Statistics Canada Poverty line. Thus, one-third is very poor, two-thirds are poor and one-third are more financially sound. In female head lone parent homes the average income is $8,498; in the male headed lone parent home the average income is $14,359; in all lone parent families the average is $16,358; in husband wife with children under sixteen families the average is approximately $18,000.

50% of lone parent families have one or more children under the age of fifteen. In Saskatchewan the average number of people in a lone family is 2.9.

All the above figures come from Saskatchewan Social Services or Health

and Statistics Canada.

In a recent study, one-third of the respondents interviewed said their children had special problems in descending order by frequency with school, health, police, discrimination, lack of money, alcohol, drugs and pregnancy. These respondents were receiving welfare at the time, and thus extrapolating figures, at least approximately 1,500 of the single parent families in the very poor group experience crisis within the family. This is why these families are called Risk Families. There is no method to discover how many families who are poor or above the Poverty line experience the same crisis difficulties nor do we know how many male headed families near the average family income group experience difficulties.

Therefore, the question remains, is single-parenthood or low socio-economic level the determining factor?

Little information is gathered concerning the 2% of female headed homes earning above the $25,000 and over wage or the 13% of single parent male headed homes in this bracket.

What are the needs of the children of single parent homes?

In order to organize such needs it is of benefit to reorganize this group into poor female headed single parent homes, and middle and upper bracket female headed single parent homes and middle and upper bracket male headed single parent homes.

The problems above cited by the poor mothers are remarkably similar to the many problems of the poor child; they are economically related. The needs of children would be considered "basic" according to current psychological theories. There is no wonder that these children have little energy and interest in education. Education is considered much higher on the hierarchy of needs and is only attended to after the basic needs are met.

For a review of these children's educational needs please review the educational needs of the poor.

In addition, to consider a compounding factor please review the educational needs of the children from homes in which divorce has occurred.

While families are lone parent families for other reasons, divorce, death and separation top the list and all involve a loss. The child's needs which interfere with learning and which take priority during the trauma period of divorce all apply perhaps more intensely for the poor child in a single parent family.

Much of the following concerning single parent upper income female headed homes and single parent male headed homes is from interviews.

While the material wealth of these families is still adequate for living, the children in these families often face new economic restrictions. While "guilt gifts" are lavished on occasion, the regular financial support for music lessons, hockey equipment, basketball trips is no longer available.

Thus, the children do have economic and loss adjustments to make.

Young children in all economic lone parent families may have to adjust to new home care arrangements. Good day care is often scarce, parental supervision is reduced, attentiveness during illness is decreased, discrimination can be increased.

Finally, one need of children which is reflected in the school behavior is the need for the modelling of two ways of doing anything - repairing a bike, resolving a conflict, decorating a room! In a two parent home the children almost by osmosis learn to view different approaches, filter them through their own personality traits, evaluate the difference and eventually formulate their own lifestyle. If one parent is not sure of what he/she is doing it is of benefit to the child. Often two heads are needed to meet

the interpersonal needs of children.

It is said that there is so much one-sidedness in these situations that somehow the child is cheated by not experiencing two ways.

Yes, the community help, outside contact with the extended family help, church men and women may offer fine models. And yet it is only within the intimacy of the home that the relationships become sufficiently interwoven to provide the kind of model referred to earlier in this paper. It is this model that provides children with the security to confidently step into the world to try to develop a lifestyle.

Thus, in the education system these children may appear slightly more insecure. Conditions in the home relative to communication and affection certainly affect the intensity of the insecurity. In the classroom these children may exhibit their insecurity in academic areas, socially, emotionally or only at times of stress. Some insecurity is quite normal and rather healthy for all children at certain periods in their lives - how much is normal? It depends on the child.

A second need of the child reflected educationally is perhaps a breadth of experiences in making judgments particularly in relationships.

A third need is some difficulty in forming relationships with the sex of the parent who is not in the home. In a female headed home with the male model missing, during preadolescence and certainly all through the growing years, boys miss the companionship of males. Female models are available in most schools for male children in a male headed single parent home, and female children do have daily opportunities to observe women.

The implications for the school are the same as for poor children and children of divorce. These ideas are echoed in two reports, One in a World of Two (NCW) and The One Parent Family in Edmonton (City of Edmonton), as

reported in News and Comments, Child Welfare, 1976.

The single parent has technical difficulties such as babysitting, attending concerts, helping at school parties or on trips. The school, if aware, can try to be flexible by providing a variety of ways in which parents can become involved. These children desperately need to feel "normal" in our society of two parent families, to feel they too have a full rich family life.

Even though the school does all it can and the home does all it can, the children need to know daily that they are worthwhile, loveable people. All children need this knowledge - the children of single parents may need it just a little more.

The third family at risk are those families from which children have been made wards of the court.

Fairly or unfairly, these are families who in the eyes of the court are unable to fulfill their responsibilities.

Saskatchewan Social Services now work in a preventative manner with families and have since the 1971 Child Welfare Act.

Of the 2,300 children of families in care, two-thirds or 14-1,500 (67.3%) are known as permanent care children, about one-third or 800 are in either temporary care (13.2%) or are in protection (12.1%). Of the 2,300 - 1,500 cases are in the four larger cities of Regina, Saskatoon, Prince Albert and North Battleford in order of descending number of cases. There was a slight upward trend per 100,000 in 1979-1980 (Social Services, 1979-1980).

The characteristic profile of such families may include a rural to urban shift (70% lived within 30 miles of the Social Services Office), alcohol and/or financial difficulties. 28.3%-26% of the mothers are mar-

ried. 56% of the caseload is single parent families. 42% had two parents while unmarried adolescent mothers and juvenile delinquents had 64% and 58%. 50% of the caseload were receiving welfare.

Of the 2,300 - 26-40% of the children are native, that is, Indian (26%) and Metis (14%) desent. Unmarried native mothers numbered 22%, Indian and part-native families comprised 47% of the protection caseload in Family Service Caseload Review, 1980. 25% lived on the reserve, 61.4% resided off the reserve, and 12.2% lived off and on the reserve in the past twelve months (Saskatchewan Social Services, 1980).

In the 1978 Hepworth report as reported by the Canadian Council for Social Development (Carrier, 1979), the number of native children in care is a complicated and serious concern. According to his figures there are 300,000 status and 750,000 non-status Indians in Canada (one million) of which 420,000 are children fifteen and under. 4% of status children and 3.5% of all native children are in care in some welfare service provincially or federally in comparison with 1.33% of all Canadian children.

The possible injustices of the situation are so numerous. Native children are caught between provincial and federal disputes; the degree of authority in crises is different; who pays for the child (who pays for the Indian child and who pays for the Native child).

Adoption is a problem. He uses this example. In 1973 - 50% of new admissions were native, usually older, but only 7½% were adopted compared to the 13% white children. Those adopted usually do not go to native homes.

Native children are also placed in non-native homes far from familiar surroundings. There are few native homes available due to economics, large families, and those families who can help are already doing so due to tradition. The fear of permanently losing their children is well founded.

The cost per child case load is $4,129, double the amount for a year's education per child.

Where do those children live?

150 children are in Foster Homes; 100 are in Special Foster Homes, 70 are in group homes, 55 are in treatment centres, 130 are in institutions, and 415 are categorized as other.

What do these facts from Family Service mean?

Half of the families are poor (50%).

Four out of five families require additional services (80%).

Three of five are single parent families (60%).

Two of five are native families (40%).

These children may be poor, from single parents and native families. Taken together with the profile of the characterstic family above and the difficulties mentioned under the sections on poor and single parent families, these children are at risk.

What are their educational needs?

These needs are the same for poor children, for single parent children and for native children.

In summary, the implications for the school are for close community involvement of the parents, open communication with the children, individual programs based on individual needs, and close attention to the development of interpersonal relationships (Family Life courses).

Schools can assist in providing orientation to a new community for children in foster homes. Often school records and files are not available, therefore, schools need to assess the ability and performance level of these children in an efficient and yet non-threatening manner. Foster parents are a source of support and guidance concerning the needs of these students.

The lives of these children may be disrupted frequently, therefore, the school can provide flexible individual programs which insure the child's success and security.

During the period of orientation the educational needs of children may not be academic, and yet reasonable expectations and routines begin to give some structure to their lives upon which they can rely.

Interpersonal relationships and establishing the best possible rapport is also a priority for these children. It may be difficult to trust adults.

Their behavior may be somewhat deviant by the school's standard. The school still needs to provide consistent, reasonable limits in order that the children learn to cooperate in this community. It takes great patience, time and energy.

Child safety, nutrition, and T.V. are general concerns in families. Specific concerns by age are day care, runaways teenage mothers and juvenile offenders.

Concerns within the Family

The final section of Children in Their Homes explores concerns within the home. These vary from crises to "just a part of life" situations. The impact on the child depends upon how the family is able to handle the situation and of course that depends upon personal resources and economic resources.

The following topics were selected. All through the lives of children;child safety and deaths, nutrition and a sociological topic - television viewing appear to be issues.

For young children, day care is an issue. For older children, runaways, teenage mothers and juvenile offenders are most described as issues related to the home in the 80's.

In Canada there are 3,937,200 children between the ages of five and fourteen (not sixteen). In Saskatchewan this source cites 166,500 children (five to fourteen) not the 204,000 (five to sixteen) children. For this section in order to describe accidents and deaths, the latter figure is used (Saskatchewan Health, 1979-1981). Of these 166,500 children, forty-seven died due to accidental deaths and there were eighty deaths in total. Over the age of fifteen (fifteen to twenty-four) there were 240 deaths in Saskatchewan of which eighty-six involved motor vehicles, forty-four other accidents, fifty-seven suicides, nine by cancer and five homicides.

The eighty deaths of the five to fourteen age group children, in comparison with 236 and 240 for years under one and fifteen to twenty-four respectively, almost look like a respite during the struggle. However, the Canadian rate per 100,000 for ten to fourteen year olds is 18.1 and the Saskatchewan rate is 23.8. The Canadian rate per 100,000 for fifteen to nineteen year olds is 63.1 and the Saskatchewan rate is 86.7. Death due to traffic accidents in the sixteen to twenty group is sixty-seven but injury was 2,765 in 1980.

Injuries resulting from sports in 1978 is twenty-two and thirty-nine for women and men respectively.

Suicides among males age fifteen to nineteen is 45.6 per 100,000 and 8.2 for females. Saskatchewan ranked second highest next to Manitoba according to the count in 1977.

Several needs are evident, one is for protection and another is to reduce risk taking behavior particularly between the age of fifteen to nineteen. As serious injury drastically effects their education, what are the implications for the school? Safety education which involves attitude, the age-appropriateness of our education and the ways in which attitudes

are formed is an implication for the school system in order to serve these youth.

Suicide also involves attitudes towards life and the finality of death; the acceptance of defeat and the knowledge of coping skills. Lack of direction in life and inability to contribute are factors in suicides. The school can teach toward healthy attitudes in these areas.

Accidents and death in children be they two months or nineteen are a tragic waste. Suicide is particularly painful for the families.

This paper cannot examine this issue in depth and yet the urgent need is there.

Saskatchewan Health, 1982, has formed a Child Safety Committee and will release a report in September,1982.

This may be the beginning of meeting the needs, including the educational needs for Safe Saskatchewan Children and Youth.

Nutrition is the second issue for children of all ages.

The issue really begins before birth. The nutrition level of women before, during and after they are pregnant affects the development of the fetus and newborn. There is an established relationship between level of nutrition and level of intelligence which of course relates to education.

The nutrition level of all mothers but particularly the nutrition of teenage mothers and poor mothers is of grave concern.

Another issue related to education is the level of nutrition of poor children. Again unless such basic needs are met the school cannot begin to interest children in learning, in fact the children do not have sufficient energy for learning. Restlessness, lack of attention, inability to concentrate are all related to physical development in part and nutrition may be a major factor.

The Montreal Gazette (July 20, 1971) reported a study of 3,500 urban children. Dr. Richard Marsan, Medical Director of the Montreal Catholic School Commission, noted the connection between poor nutrition and poor school performance. He pointed out that the poorer children are not necessarily less bright than middle class children, but their school progress is usually much poorer. He also said:

> If these kids are constantly sick, fatigued, hungry, badly clothed and not too clean, they are seriously distracted in school. They become a problem for the teacher. They have a high absenteeism rate. Their school progress is delayed. If your blood sugar level is low, your brain cells don't work well. Your head takes twice as long to do calculations. If the low level persists, your possibility of using your intelligence will be decreased.

The relationship of nutrition and learning disabilities is an issue over which there has been much controversy in recent years (Stronck, 1980) (Jani, 1978) (Powers, 1975).

Charlton-Seifert et al (1980) expresses concern related to the effect of sugar on the behavior and brain cell function of children. Children from Division I to Division IV are exposed to great amounts of sugar. Whether this is a direct or indirect effect for all or some children in general, or for all or some learning disabled children remains an interesting challenge.

Kelin (1978) relates nutrition and lack of stimulation for poor children with success in schools.

Buckley (1977) relates allergens and food additives to nutrition, metabolism, brain function and learning.

What are the educational needs of children?

Children need good food and knowledge affecting attitudes and practices concerning nutrition.

The implications for the schools are summed up in the following report.

A 1973 N.C.W. report entitled One Child One Chance expresses several ideas related to schools. Establish a nationwide system of school meals, use mass media and schools to promote a public education program and finally, involve all the community in the promotion of good nutrition.

The final topic which affects children of all ages is the "at home babysitter" - television.

Report after report is written, advertising money is at stake. Depending on the source and personal bias, television either affects children in a positive or negative manner.

The issues around television can be further reduced as to what is or is not happening to children as they watch television and what happens to the child's behavior after watching television.

The quality of television like the quality of day care makes all the difference. The way in which parents use
affects the effects on the child. Television is a tool to be used not to rule children and families.

Television is essentially a passive activity. While children sit or lie to watch they do not play, engage in conversation, do not use their hands or bodies or become involved in open-ended problem solving. Does the value from television warrant such inactivity?

Television may influence some children. Extreme behavior does occur. There is always someone willing to jump from a tree pretending he is Superman. Children's play is affected as they imitate this "model" which is part of the family. Herein lies the difference between the cowbo movies seen every Saturday afternoon. T.V. is now within the sanctum of the home and perhaps is having more impact. The values of children are influenced by television. Vandalism, clothes fads, food, Christmas toys, summer vacations,

what it is to be a man or woman, the time and effort it takes to solve problems, the intracacies of private lives, the value of life, the casualness with which death is treated - all these impinge upon our youngsters. Each one offers a wealth of family discussion material. How many families take the time to do this?

Is the risk of non-examined television viewing worth it?

Thus, the educational needs of children as related to television are to teach children how to make decisions. Decisions related to their needs and wants and concern the balance of activity and rest, individual or group interaction, and the balance among music, physical fitness, and the intellectual stimulation that is best for them. These decisions take a lifetime to form and are fluid. Thus, television will be used in an appropriate amount and for reasons of which the child is aware. Hopefully, the balance will be knowledge based.

Implications for the school are to teach the children the process of making decisions and to give the children ample opportunity to do critical thinking appropriate to their developmental level. In the school use television as a tool modelling how it is of value and the precautions necessary.

Through a natural use of television children are thus freed to learn.

Day care is one of the prominent issues of concern in the lives of young children. Day care in centres, day care in homes and noonhour/after school care are all facets of this issue.

In Saskatchewan in 1976, there were approximately 60,000 school aged children (under the age of thirteen) with working mothers. There is no urban rural figure for working mothers. However, as previously mentioned, there were 4,404 non-farm rural single and married women with children who

filed T-4 forms in 1981. Day Care is identified as a priority by rural women in a project currently in progress through the Women's Division of Saskatchewan Labour.

It is estimated that the total number of day care spaces of all types needed in the province to date are 14,000 and the number available as of July 1982 is estimated at 4,500. Sitters are used by parents of the remaining 60,000 children. The needed 14,000 spaces indicate the continued use of sitters. The 10,000 space difference reflects that 2½ times as many spaces are needed in this province. The demand is there!

What are the educational needs of children who are of school age and in day care?

The majority of school age children in day care will be kindergarten age children who return to the day care centres for the remainder of their day and children who go to a day care centre before school, at noon and after school hours.

The educational needs of children who are in day care for a greater part of the day and then in the school depends on the quality of the care in the centres.

If the centres are overcrowded and unattractive, if the staff provides custodial rather than enriched care for children, if as individuals, few needs are met then at school the children will try to compensate for the losses.

Some varified reactions of children who came from such day care centres indicate that these children need warm interpersonal attention and care in small classes so they are indeed able to find themselves worthy of being an individual. When the child begins to feel able and worthy enough to give something then learning will occur. The child is then able to take

advantage of many activities offered. Short attention, "flitting from activity to activity", "showing off", or conversely day dreaming, listlessness, inability to attend will begin to be replaced by relaxed but energetic, enthusiastic children.

If on the other hand centres are relaxed, spacious, provide the kind of security that supplements the security of the home, provide consistent models among home, school and centre, then day care can be a most valuable experience for children. In fact in some instances the time and care taken in planning just the appropriate activity for the child is more than a parent at home with two or three other youngsters has energy to do.

Other technical needs of children in day care are for the involvement of day care workers with teachers in a communication system from school to home and home to school. Such needs are not limited to young children. Older children in after school care require communication concerning homework, projects, etc. When the centre is within the school a daily diary approach can be used.

An implication for the school is to involve parents and day care workers in establishing effective communication systems for that particular locale. This communication should include the goals of the school for the year and interpreting how the particular child's needs will be addressed.

If the centres are in the schools the modeling is immediate.

Finally, this issue of day care has one more facet to it. In the next section information about teenage mothers is considered. The newborns of these mothers are the school age children in five to six years. Few people today need to be convinced that what happens to these babies now will have a profound and lasting effect all their lives.

Therefore, it is necessary to insure that inexperienced children

do not remain without parent education to enable them to do a good job.

Whether children or youth should be permitted to keep their children is not the issue here. That issue has been settled at this time - they are.

The children are also a fact. Day care centres could not only provide opportunities for parent education,if these girls were given support until they had a marketable skill then the taxpayer would be freed the expense of welfare.

Day care centres in high schools or tutorial centres could provide other students who have never been in contact with infants and toddlers the opportunity to learn about child development, about their own reactions to children and about relationships.

In all, day care centres in these situations are desperately needed by the parents, by the children and by the province of Saskatchewan.

Will we really provide equal opportunity?

During the teen years, three issues which affect the lives of these youth have been selected. They are runaways, teenage mothers and juvenile offenders.

Adams and Munro (1979) describe a number of factors which can be causal agents for running away. The behavior is not clearly psychopathological. Further, there is no clear cut profile found for runaways. Overgeneralization is a caution however. One interesting comment was in regard to the risk taking nature of running away.

During adolescence, risk taking seems to occur and at the "risk" of being too simplistic, the female risk-taking results in pregnancy and the male risk-taking results in car accidents while both females and males risk by running away.

Perhaps our youth today in running away are simply looking for new and exciting challenges which eighty years ago the youth found in Saskatchewan. They were called pioneers!

What is so serious today are the consequences of runaways and the risk taking which results in pregnancy or vehicle accidents. Youth discover the harsh reality of consequences when it is too late.

Therein lies the dilemma for the school and home concerning runaways.

Is the child released to runaway and discover that running away has consequences and that one of them is,there is no running away from poor self-concept or inability to communicate?

Or is the child restrained from leaving because the consequences are simply too potentially devastating?

The educational needs of those contemplating running away is to be able to communicate what it is that needs to be changed in order to become comfortable in the present situation. Following awareness and expression comes a time for planning the changes and concurrent responsibilities based on the consequences.

From time to time through support the potential runaway and contact personnel need to discuss how the changes are affecting the runaway and what further problems occur.

Many families experience the upheaval due to the threat of running away. It is cute when the children are young, it is a test of parental authority as the child grows older.

Each time,the indication,that the children are being overwhelmed by circumstances justifiably or unjustifiably,provides the homes and schools with food for thought.

Hopefully, goals are not reassessed in crises situations. But whether

there is much external reaction to the threat, the signal should not be disregarded.

When children are older, threats or actual acts of running away from a situation is a request for change. Perhaps the requests are entirely unrealistic and dangerous, however, if proposed changes are considered and the responsibilities and consequences identified, then it is the youth's decision to run or not.

Sometimes youth need a sumbolic "cutting of the apron strings". Such an experience serves notice to the world that the child is a man or woman.

What are the implications for the school?

Again, does the school act as a social service agent? Here there is a choice for the child will no longer be at school. Or is there a choice? Can we afford to ignore youth who are planning but inappropriately asking to communicate needs?

The second issue for discussion concerns teenage mothers.

This paper will not attempt to discuss how to prevent pregnancies except in a cursory manner. Certainly the ethics around abortion and sex education and where the home and school parameters are, will not be addressed.

This paper is concerned with the lives of children, those factors in the lives of these children that affect educational needs and the implications for schools limit this examination.

The girls are pregnant, the life of the mother and the life of the newborn is affected.

What are the facts?

In 1980 there were approximately 111,136 girls ages thirteen to eighteen

in the population. This represents 11.5% of the population. In the population, some girls are married and the births are therefore legitimate. The younger the female the more likely she is single. In 1978 for women nineteen and under, of the 2,645 live births, 1,163 were legitimate and 1,482 (56%) were illegitimate according to the Saskatchewan Health definition. Saskatchewan ranks highest in total births among the provinces for this age group.

There is a group of adolescent girls who have relative degrees of support who decide to raise their offspring and who are not yet prepared to do so.

An interesting set of articles is found in the November 1979 issue of Perception, a Canadian Journal of Social Comment.

The educational needs of these girls are to continue their education, to use their various abilities and talents and to learn how to be mothers in order to become productive members of society.

While these young people complete their training they need support.

The children of these mothers also need to be considered. They are not school age, however, day care centres as previously mentioned could be considered as an alternative. If an investment is made in the future of these youngsters, if some of the complex factors related to why youngsters become pregnant can be addressed, then perhaps this cycle can slowly and gradually be broken.

The reasons why girls become pregnant in the first place relate partly to their attitudes about themselves, the vulnerability of their situation for sexual exploration and the lack of future goals.

What are the implications for the school?

Perhaps the school can assist both the mothers and children by guiding

them into formulating goals and ways of controlling their own lives so there is some hope of being able to fulfill these goals.

Practical suggestions are to provide appropriate conditions for education which do not discount the abilities of these girls. Perhaps day care facilities to enable parent education could be developed as part of a Family Life program.

The appropriate balance between this program and community involvement and parent support will vary by local.

The general goal of the school is to provide equal opportunity in this situation as it does throughout Saskatchewan. Toward the implication of this goal schools strive.

The final issue which affects the lives of older children to be discussed is juvenile offenders.

In 1980-1981 there were 66,969 twelve to fifteen year olds. Of this number, 2,050 complaints were received, 852 were rated as offenders (Saskatchewan Social Services, 1981). Another set of statistics and which involves changes in report procedures excluding the Department of Northern Saskatchewan. In these the total number of young offenders in 1980-1981 is 1,907. 787 of these were adjudged delinquents. The various dispositions were suspended disposition, adjourned, fine, probation, warning, restitution, temporary commital and other. The most frequent disposition is probation (information is based on Statistics Canada, Juvenile Offenders Data).

What are the general characteristics of these youth?

The largest group of offenders is fifteen years of age; they are usually boys and they usually live in poorer districts; they may or may not be white. Generalizations are extremely dangerous using this profile for the definition of offenders by age, the variety and analysis of the information

and the factors such as mental ability, economic levels, family protection or support all influence the picture.

The educational needs of these children relate to the needs of children listed above - children with special education needs, poor children, general needs of white or native children, children from at risk homes particularly children in care.

Another clue to the educational needs of these children is perhaps found in the types of offences committed which are usually theft under $200 and breaking and entering.

These youth are searching for money or material goods.

When describing the lives of the poor, a reference regarding the training of youngsters concerning their desperate need for money was made. In school, making decisions, learning to understand needs and wants could be part of their experience.

Community involvement via Junior Achievement, Big Brothers perhaps could provide these youngsters at an early age with opportunities to earn money before the need rules the child. How strong this need is and if any program can help is not known.

Throughout this paper the term community and parental involvement has been used as an implication for the schools.

A subproject of the Minister's Advisory Committee for the Curriculum and Instruction Review will be devoted to a study of Support Services for the schools including Social Supports, Staff Supports and Program Services, and Parental and Community Resource Supports.

Therefore, in closing this third section entitled Children in Their Homes there is only a brief examination of the issue of parental involvement. Since it comes from the home, community involvement is part of sec-

tion five.

Historically, parents have been involved with the initiation of the school in every part of Saskatchewan. From this tradition parents and school have been automatically partners in the education of the young.

Throughout the years the numbers of children and the increase in kinds of resources that could be made available more efficiently and effectively through the centraling of control, are the main factors in the concentration of services.

Now parents realize that what they have to offer and what their local community has to offer, though different and perhaps less slick is more appropriate for their child since it meets the needs of their child.

Decentralization versus centralization is now an issue. Thus parental involvement has become a request from local school communities.

Gelman and Meers, 1979, predict that there are "changes in attitude toward parenting which deemphasize permissiveness and promote supervision and parental contact". These kinds of changes in child rearing practices are perhaps at the root of the trend toward parental involvement. Other factors such as flexibility in work schedule, smaller families and the economic situation are quite real.

One of the difficulties involving parents in the school is the attitude that parents have that they are not wanted. Sometimes parents' perceptions are correct. There are some educators who still discount the information received from parents as being far too prejudicial to be correct. What educators forget is that prejudicial or not the child is raised according to that perception and the child's behavior will reflect it. Parents are, however, usually most realistic.

In the majority of schools, parents are wanted. Many educators seek

knowledge of the children they teach. They need to know how that child responds and thus will be better able to provide for their educational needs.

Another difficulty for all of us is, we have, at one time, been consumers of education. We all have horror stories to relate about what happened to us at school. If they were not horror stories then, they are now after fifteen to thirty years of embellishment (poetic license of course).

However, as we begin to work in the school - teacher or parent - all our experiences influence how we think things should be done. As teachers we soon realize that being a teacher is vastly different from being a student in the school. Parents realize this too but not until they are involved. If parents are too reluctant they never experience the difference in role and the difference thirty years has made!

Parental involvement is not confined to the school or the school day. Many parents are involved. They drive children to libraries or do experiments with their children for presentation at school.

Project work is not only a most effective way of meeting individual needs and providing enrichment, it is the natural result of a curriculum trying to respond to the knowledge explosion of the past fifty years.

In a desperate attempt to provide for children's needs now as well as try to equip them for the future the curriculum is crammed full.

The curriculum is like the Russian folk tale so beautifully interpreted by Alvin Tresselt.

The forest animals find a mitten and all climb inside for warmth and comfort. The most outrageously large animals are able to fit inside. Until....until the last wee mouse - who of course should be small enough - tries to slip inside. The entire mitten explodes scattering all animals

and bits of mitten except for the end of the thumb which finds its place as a toque for the mouse.

How much will the curriculum mitten hold? It is a warm place - the children are a captive audience in school. Outrageously large subjects have been fit into it - environmental education, consumer education, career education. These types of "educations" are to be integrated into the rest of the subjects.

However, integrate anymore and the subject itself will disappear exploding the curriculum into bits and pieces.

And anyway, who is teaching subjects - it is the child. It is their own unique balance among a multitude of needs that teachers seek to identify using them from which to teach.

An excellent article related to parental involvement which rather concisely develops a model and a practical application, is the December 1981 issue of Phi Delta Kappa's (PDK) newsletter - Practical Applications of Research. These models will be examined in the subproject mentioned above.

Finally, Cooke and Apollani, 1975(Thomas, 1978) and the PDK Fastback #120 both provide three views of how to actualize parent involvement in schools.

Parents become directly or indirectly involved in the school day, become involved at a provincial, system, board or community level in a multitude of ways. This volunteerism is not the only way to have an input into the education of children.

In summary, yes it is crucial that the lives of children have close parental involvement. One place in which to come in contact with your child is in the school. The educational needs of the child do require support from the home. One way to support children is to participate in their education. One place to participate is in the school. Finally, there are im-

plications for the schools. Schools need to work for open communication to insure that all parents have access to becoming involved as they are able and that the lives of children are truly enriched.

Children in Schools

The fourth section of this paper focuses upon the child in a new setting, the school.

Generally children experience "school" sometime between the tender ages of three and five. Some children are a part of a group as early as eighteen months in day care centres.

As each set of people come in contact with the child consciously or unconsciously there is an attempt to determine what that child is like.

Witness young children waiting in line in a grocery store cashier check out. Reactions from children and adults around them vary from quiet observation to a tickle under the chin, a smile, a wink or an old fashioned game of peek-a-boo.

As children move from the community of the home, the next community with which they have to deal is the community of the school.

Children have basic needs which need to be met in order to learn and to become a a concerned critic who is able to give

Sometimes if you wish to get the feel of being a youngster in school, bend down and view the world from a metre off the floor. Even that physical adjustment changes our perception.

In your imagination place one youngster inside the door of a school.

That is you.

Think of what you would need in school.

First, let us look at what you brought to school.

There are all those physical characteristics - red hair, freckles? How do you look?

Secondly, you may have a predisposition to act and react in a particular pattern. Thomas et al (1970) states "...environment is an important factor in the formation of personality; (but) they argue instead that personality is shaped by the constant interplay of temperament and environment." Through profile tracing over ten years children were grouped into "easy", "difficult" and "slow to warm up" in regard to ease of caring and training. Still, this study is only one of thousands which has tried to understand the relationship between the nature of children (innate) and the nurture of children (his environment) and its effect on their development.

Next, there are all those experiences the effects of which only your personality can determine. Experiences related to the home, related to being a member of a specific group, related to being a child of Saskatchewan have been expressed previously in this paper.

Choose any combination of the possible million shaping experiences and personality traits. You are unique.

What do you need?

In 1979 I.Y.C. - International Year of the Child celebrated the United Nations charter of Children's Rights adopted by Canada.

The scoffing could be heard all over - "Ha! Children's rights, they have the right to sit down and obey me." "Children's rights! - What about parent's rights."

"Children's rights? What about responsibilities?"

Some parents were threatened about infringement upon the home fearing that somehow these rights would be supplied by the government or community and therefore the home would no longer have benevolent authority and would no longer be able to mold their children.

There is no supplement for a good home. The home has its own special unique contribution to children. The essentialness of that contribution is never in jeopardy. Nothing can take its place. Millions of dollars are spent when the home is unable to perform its task and yet the child still loses to some degree.

Children's rights are a tool to use to insure that the home can give.

With a close examination of these rights, we discover that they reflect the basic needs of all human beings. These rights are as innocuous as:

> The right to affection, love and understanding.
>
> The right to adequate nutrition and medical care.
>
> The right to protection against all forms of neglect, cruelty and exploitation.
>
> The right to free education and to full opportunity for play and recreation.
>
> The right to a name and nationality.
>
> The right to special care, if handicapped.
>
> The right to be among the first to receive relief in times of disaster.
>
> The right to learn to be a useful member of society and to develop individual abilities.
>
> The right to be brought up in a spirit of peace and universal brotherhood.
>
> The right to enjoy these rights, regardless of race, color sex, religion, national or social origin.

And yet these rights are not the rights of some children in Canada, especially those who are poor, those of at risk families and those who experience the crises mentioned in this paper (Carrier, Perception, May 1979).

Among these are the basic needs which in some degree must be met before the child can profit from the"right to a free education."

Current psychological theories support the notion that somehow there is a ladder of needs and that to go "up" you must first step on the first rung. The rungs are needs that must be met. They range from physical (food, shelter), psychological (love, acceptance), social, intellectual and

ethical needs.

Piaget and Kohlberg also see developmental phases which combine with these needs. The range and depth within each need, particularly the above physical needs, determines what children can absorb and use.

Jerome Bruner sees a more linear model each facet from which the child needs to sample (Bruner, 1973).

Thus the term educational needs is broadly defined since they are so contingent upon other needs.

Noor, 1981, in a Working Paper for the World Bank explores another model of basic needs related to education. Basic education provides skills to communicate, skills to improve the quality of life and skills for production (p.i). While this report is addressed to the poor and the 40% illiterate people of our world, never the less, this way of structuring our educational needs is simple but can be used to classify the majority of needs.

In further reference to Thomas et al (1970) another educational need is to be educated with some regard for the individuality of your personality. Thomas reports "A demand that conflicts excessively with a child's personality characteristics and capabilities is likely to place the child under heavy and perhaps even unbearable stress. If the two influences (temperament and environment) are harmonized you can expect healthy development...; if they are dissonant, behavioral problems are almost sure to ensue.

Food for thought!

Perkinson, 1979, provides another perception of the educational needs of children - he believes our responsibility in school is to develop "concerned critics" who hold the decision makers in society accountable and thus guard their own freedom. Dale (1978) echoes the same sentiment in his definition of a good mind. "It discerns, doubts, searches, probes. It

answers questions and questions answers" (p.45).

In summary, the educational needs of children are: affection, love, understanding, protection, full free education including an opportunity for play and recreation and special care of handicapped; an opportunity to become a useful member of society and to develop special abilities; to experience a spirit of peace and brotherhood without discrimination; skills to communicate; to improve the quality of life for production; regard for the individuality of each child's personality; skills to become a concerned critic.

Imagine yourself as the child inside the door of the school. Would you want to enter a place that would attempt to meet all those educational needs? Which ones would you omit and still be anxious to be in school?

Is the school a social support service agent? If so the challenge is evident.

If not, what would you remove from the list above?

Is the risk worth it?

Is there a choice?

Learners have a style of learning for them and need to be given instruction compatible with their brain orientation.

Learning is evidenced in a change in behavior.

How it happens is a theory. How to make it happen is instruction.

We think we know how children learn but no one has put a child under a microscope, peered into the brain to say aha! there it is - the child has just learned.

Conversely, we have ways of knowing when instruction is successful. When it is not - we do not know why - rather we use trial and error until

a particular combination is successful for that child.

The ways in which children learn are different by age. Infants and toddlers learn from their senses as they imitate models. Preschoolers begin to use language as another way of learning. In school, children need to be physically involved, to imitate, to use language and to manipulate concrete objects. As they pass into adolescence, children are then able to keep a visual picture (word or number) in mind and then alter it using other ideas. New combinations and possibilities then come to mind.

Norman et al attempts to provide a schematic model almost akin to a computer's. Langford and Bailey (1981) request a systematic flow from theory to instruction.

Currently there is a theory relating the brain to learning. The following articles show the range of ideas within this topic.

Hart (1981) describes the characteristics of learning related to this theory. The brain is the computor centre actively seeking information where the learning of patterns and of actions are recognized, sorted, classified and understood. Therefore, in order to instruct, it is necessary to present information simply and logically in small bits. Much of it should be presented orally. This deluge of information needs to be discussed and to be experienced in a relaxed atmosphere. In another article (March 1981) he suggests that the traditional school setting is threatening and is not compatible with the triume, whole brain approach. Triume means that three parts of the brain in delicate balance are seeking control of the behavior. Many skills, he theorizes, are learned in the cerebral hemisphere which is most reactive to threat.

Finally, Grady and Luecke (1978) suggest that there are two hemispheres to the brain, the left of which specializes in analytical functions while the

right one specializes in simultaneous function. When both are in balance and everything clicks synergetic or peak experiences occur. They concluded that this theory does not offer a panacea (although) it does provide an avenue for increased instructional effectiveness in education.

Besides theories of learning other concerns related to learning are addressed by the following.

Epstein (1982) explores the problem of match first discussed by J. M. Hunt in 1961. The match referred to is "fitting the instruction to the receptive competence and learning style of the child" (p.25). In other words, the way of teaching needs to fit the maturity and way in which a particular child learns.

Barbe and Milone (1981) describe the ways in which children learn as modalities. These are simply three of the senses used in learning - vision, listening and touch. These ways are different in strength (ability to be used), vary by age, development and environment. They work together more as the child matures and transfer is possible. It is not evident that one way is any better for boys or girls, for the right or left handed or for one race or another.

Finally, Davis, Chiasson - Schwimmer (1981) use a Relational Thinking Style model to describe the different ways children learn. They are described as: flitters who are frustrated and often disruptive, sequential thinkers who follow steps, the multi-sequential thinkers who hold several sequences in mind at once and sort groups to use patterns, a slower but creative thinker who experiments with ideas in an imaginative way, and finally, a thinker who can utilize any of the above as required. Cavanaugh (1981) supports the concept of style and relates it to instructional methods.

Based on learning theory and its relationship to instructional needs,

what are the educational needs of children?

Obviously, the educational needs of children vary by child. They tell us by their interests.

If brain theory is correct then the children need a variety of content to use both parts of the brain, and "chewable" portions of information presented simply and logically so they can discuss and do something to learn. These portions should fit the ways in which the particular child learns.

The school implications are planning for individualized instruction to provide for continuous progress. This means that goals are systematically formulated into an action plan which enables teachers to become aware of how they themselves learn and to provide individualized learning materials which physically involve children in doing their learning.

These implications do not only apply to young children. The reason Division III and IV children are "turned off" may very well be that, at that period of their school life the "telling" begins and the "doing" is not related to their personal ways of learning. Readiness for abstract learning in these divisions needs careful consideration.

A further implication for the schools is to consider new viable ways of organizing the use of individual programs. Greater community involvement and participation may help the teacher to be everywhere at once without chaos.

In order to provide opportunities for every child the school needs confidence in its approach to discipline, to the balance between content and process, to the type of classroom teacher and program it offers.

The final section of this topic Children in Schools describes a selection of issues in education for the 80's.

In the 80's, Hechinger (1981) calls for a new pride - a readiness to march forward using new tools to rebuild lasting values and provide opportunity for every child.

The topics selected serve to give a new pride in old values enabling the provision of opportunities for every child.

These have been organized into issues that affect all the Saskatchewan children in their schools and into issues that affect particular groups by age. These school related issues were selected because they had not been touched upon in other sections of this section or paper,or because much discussion about the topics has recently occurred.

Finally, a peek into the future concludes this section.

The issues which affect all Saskatchewan children in schools are also organized from general to specific.

What type of discipline should be used?

What about moral education?

Should we base education on children's interests? They are so changeable.

What should a classroom be like?

How do teachers make a difference?

How are "good" programs developed?

What type of discipline should be used, is a question which until recent years has been the perogative of the school. Unless the school was found wantonly cruel "if you got it at school you got it twice as bad at home".

As the effect of discipline upon school performance and character is considered, parents and educators alike have begun to understand the com-

plexity of the interactions which culminate in discipline.

Clarke (1977) in Alberta directed a study involving 100 schools and the 50 associated units. The questionnaires received were from 100 principals, 80 vice principals, 1,309 teachers, 1,406 students, 1,715 parents of children in the 100 schools, 48 superintendents, 233 central office personnel, 273 trustees, 64 regional office personnel for a 72-100% response.

In general, the response is that discipline in moderation, the characteristics of the current situation, was well accepted. Indeed the school discipline was considered appropriate and fair. The twenty findings listed describe the wide range of opinions and ideas. Some are: discipline is too lenient (37%), too strict (34%). Children should quit school, be given guidance, induced to behave. Extreme groups of opinions were held toward traditional (do what ever you have to do for as long as you have to do it) and humanistic (greater freedom, encourage self-discipline, accept), discipline slightly weighted against the latter. 1,000 suggestions for improving discipline given by frequency were participation standards, school conditions, understand and accept and others. Small size school means good, large means bad.

Of 5,230 opinions the main cause of discipline is poor behavior (1,322); specifically lack of respect for authority and property, poor attitudes, lack of interest, disregard for rules and regulations; irresponsibility and lack of self-discipline. The second cause is lack of discipline in the home (1,122). Others were inappropriate action of teachers (932), poor parent teacher rapport (873) and poor student teacher relations (834) - total 4,039. The majority of the acts occur in the school. Parents and their children showed consistency in opinion but between all parents and all children there occurred a gap in all items except there was group opposition to having

children quit after elementary school. Teachers held virtually the same views with slight variation by sex, by subject taught and by age.

According to the students it is the unsuccessful non-academic students who turn to misbehavior.

Parents, either two parents or lone parents, were different by age.

Although the groups differ from one another the diversity within each one of the groups was greater.

Children's educational needs around discipline seem obvious. Unless children's behavior predisposes them to learn they are unable to do so.

The school itself needs to develop a plan of consistent discipline which is communicated to students.

The implication for the school is to involve parents since the home background of the child appears to be what triggers their reactions to instances in the school.

A final implication for the school is to develop strategies which will teach a child how to be self-disciplined. Now it is hit and miss. Perhaps an innovative project could explore this topic.

Moral education appears to be one way to develop self-discipline.

Again, moral education known also as the teaching of values by the public has been misunderstood.

The difference between what is taught and how it is taught becomes the real issue.

In moral education one aim is to teach students <u>how</u> to become self-disciplined, responsible citizens not <u>what</u> they should believe in to be that way.

Berkowitz (1981) summarizes much of the information concerning moral education and then describes some implications for the school. He says

first set the stage - "classroom composition is vital and student skill is vital. Then student communication is important as is teacher skill in facilitating open discussion among students in a relaxed atmosphere"(p.30). These implications could be a basis in providing a program designed to develop self-discipline.

Should we base education on children's interest?

The basis of this issue is the same as the one in the issue above.

This age old argument about what is more important, what is learned (content) or how it is being learned (process) is alive and well.

The base of the argument lies in the assumption that being able to communicate the ideas about something will make you more successful in life than knowing how to find out about something.

In reality it is a balance of course.

An offshoot of this theme is the issue of interests. There are educators who believe that the facts and ideas needed in order to communicate, are more important and thus the child's interests are far too superficial and narrow to use. Those who believe the process (the knowledge about doing something which in turn generates facts and ideas) is more important also believe that it does not matter what is used to learn how to do something. Besides the child's own interest will motivate him to do-(Chrisholm,1975).

In reality it is a different balance for each individual child and teacher.

However, the school implications are to consciously provide both ways of addressing the issue so there is variety from which to find a balance. We can be confident that both ways are necessary.

Greer, 1973, describes the necessity of providing alternatives within

integration in order to "actively oppose the tendency to push other human beings into positions that restrict their freedom (... for a) society free of racism, for a society of creative individuals, ... to have a world free from hate, hunger and harassment" (p.277).

The next issue to be addressed is what should a classroom be like?

Frequently during this paper the topic of classroom atmosphere has surfaced. The consensus of opinion is that the classroom is to be non-threatening, relaxed, in order for learning to take place and according to Hart (1981), for the brain to actually function properly.

Further support may be surmised by the work of Prock (1982) who says "the longer children attend school the less well they feel about their capacity to perform academic tasks...we might be sending young people to the more sophisticated environment of secondary schools at a time when their feeling about their capabilities to cope academically is at a low ebb" (p.9).

Further she states that those learning disabled children whose "problems were not of sufficient magnitude to warrant learning assistance portrayed the lowest level of academic self esteem" (p. 7-8).

Finally, Prock (1980) suggests five implications for the school - admit the disability, provide a calm, accepting, supportive environment which provides honest, positive, emotional experiences in which there is private communication - plan gradual reduction of dependence upon others for feelings of self worth. While these are particular to learning disabled children, they are applicable to the general classroom and thus are used here rather than in the section relating to special education.

Learning disabled students, although considered part of the special education picture, have a rather special characteristic which places them fully into the milieu of the school. They only experience difficulty when

they come to school.

There are many implications for the school based upon the children's educational needs for an effectively prepared classroom. However, the discussion around the two final issues - how do teachers make a difference? and how are "good" programs developed? are interwoven and must be addressed as a unit.

How do teachers make a difference?

Teacher characteristics is also a "chestnut" issue in education. The studies and reports indicate that teachers need to be trained to be open, genuine and concrete.(Weigand, 1971). Openness means to be able to tolerate many ideas without pointing out how wrong each one is except the one in the text or in the guidebook or in your head. It means to be able to take the glimmer of an idea and through questions draw it from the child so it can be examined and formulated by the child. All the happenings, negative or positive, within the classroom must be dealt with in a genuine manner. This means what happens matters to everyone in the classroom. Because there is an openness and no threats then the unfortunate happenings need not be hidden. Teacher power does not need to suppress a happening so it will not "get out" and the struggle which sometimes occurs in a caring situation can be resolved. From this acceptance, action and assessment the "coping skills" are taught and learned.

Concreteness is a rather elusive concept. In this paper the third characteristic to be discussed is called stability. While related to concreteness it is not quite the same. Stability in a teacher requires the confidence based upon well defined premises. In this teacher the child has trust.The stability and quiet sureness in the approach tells the child this person is sure enough about their principles that they will not let

them down.

Stability is not rigidity, it is not ignorance, it is not dullness.

Indeed stability means the child is freed to get on with the tasks at hand because the limits of the classroom are known, the principles of the teacher are sure and the tasks beckon. All energies are turned in upon the task. No peripheral testing is necessary. In fact the child is not even curious about the testing.

Thus if teachers have these desirable characteristics then how do they make a difference. They affect the students' self-esteem, the students' performance and the students' goal setting (Fagan, Ponder 1981).

Teachers work within the context of a school. What is described below applies to individual teachers as well.

Yes, there are some prerequisites a child needs to have in order to learn. Yes, the home does have a monumental effect upon the children. Yes, there are some factors from which a child needs to benefit in order to learn. However, that the school makes no difference even in poor situations is not the necessary conclusion to reach.

Below is how the schools make a difference.

Shoemaker, Fraser, November 1981, describe many studies which address this issue. In each study the schools had certain characteristics as reflected by the teachers and principals which were related to the results; the principal is assertive and success oriented; the pleasant atmosphere supports the achievements of happy teachers and children; there is order - as stated above the limits need not be tested; expectations are high. The optimism and trust concerning the child's abilities "I know you can do it" spurs children and teachers to great achievements; goals are clear. The children and teachers knew where they were going academically as well as

in all other areas.

Caruso, Detterman (1981) and Nieman, Gastright (1981) studies "offer compelling evidence that (good) early childhood programs do have long term educational benefits for participants - and hence for society" (p.185).

In such an atmosphere the child succeeds. It is contended that because they succeed as people first they then succeed as achievers in education.

Success breeds success!

If the classroom and teachers need particular characteristics perhaps the programs which are made up of activities for the children also need particular characteristics.

How are "good" programs developed?

The issues lie in two areas of this topic. There is little agreement of what a "good" program is. That is why the school strives to find the balance from a number of alternatives which is appropriate to its own community and then still retain sufficient flexibility within the balance so individuals can also be afforded a wide range of choice.

Finding a "good" program is a sorting process. The direction of the sorting is determined by the personal definition of the sorter be it parent, minister of education, regional director, directors, superintendents, consultants, principals, teachers or children.

The process follows a cyclical direction for children influence parents and the process begins again. There is certain flexibility at each level and yet the real or imagined constraints have their effect.

Aoki (1982) in his address February 18, 1982, addressed some ways in which the personal criteria for defining our definition of a "good"

program is made.

The sorter chooses one or several of the general ways of thinking about programs. Aoki calls them Sets.

In Set One man's goal is to control the world by objectively systematically learning how to do it. In Set Two the meaning of the quality of life experience in a situation is of most importance. In Set Three the central theme is how human beings become more human.

Having said that a "good" program is based on personal criteria, some "bias" will be described.

Spann (1977) capisulizes this bias - "a successful (good) program is accomplished by determining the students' needs and by carefully designing curriculum (activities) and instruction (methods) to help students develop their academic and personal skills" (p.23).

What are the implications for the school in order to plan for the kind of classroom atmosphere including teacher and programs which results in successful, healthy human beings?

To begin, there has to be a commitment, a financial commitment, based on the belief that an investment today repays itself in dividends financially and socially in the future.

Children in Saskatchewan are at least as important as potash!

It is false economy to try to provide the bare minimum in addressing the needs of the general and specific groups of children.

First, the money, time, effort and energy "goes down the drain" because unless a need is fully met it is not met at all.

For example, to provide the learning disabled students with help for fifteen minutes once a week does nothing.

Save the money, save the energy, and save the children the indignity

and pain of expending their energy uselessly. The children think they are failures when in reality it is us who fail the child.

Their problems are real and success is paramount to overcoming them.

How dare we set children up to fail!

The reason there is such a proliferation of articles about teacher stress is not that teachers are ill prepared, emotional weaklings or trying to cop out, it is the continual pressure of knowing that a little is not enough, that if only one could find a way to give more or to get more within a fixed situation then the result just might be success for the child. Teachers are dreamers and will try the impossible. Tragically, stress is taking its toll.

Let us look at the classroom. There would be somewhere between twenty to twenty-five children in two grades, usually one teacher, sometimes one hour to prepare per week, and a school day that is five to five and one-half hours long which is all the child can take.

Among the twenty-five children, there are at least fifteen children with particular needs and then ten children who also have their own unique personalities and skills which need to be developed.

Now, the well trained teacher knows that something can be done for those in that group of fifteen. These are the children with specific needs: learning disabilities, giftedness, children of divorce, single parent children, athletically talented, native, reflective thinkers, linear thinkers, right or left brain dominant children, visual learners, auditory learners - all of these children could benefit now and for all time if - if only there were enough time to do something for them. Do you know of any businessman who makes as many decisions in a day as a teacher? Do you know who in the public,works with twenty-five clients or customers at once? Do you know

anyone who is not allowed the time to prepare for the clients? Do you know anyone who is not able to analyse the situation before acting? Teachers meet the class and are expected without taking planning time to have programs ready for twenty children in one to two weeks.

Of course there can be mutual benefits from the same activities but these activities often need just a little twist, just a little extra planning time to make them more appropriate. Most of the child's needs, however, must involve individualized programs.

On one hand, teachers know what to do yet are not free to do so - on the other, teachers are often open season for the public. Teachers know why Johnny cannot read and they could do something if given not half a chance - a whole chance.

Teacher confidence is at the best tenuous. Teachers work with children who, bless their hearts, are unreliable. Teachers never know for sure something will help a child succeed. It seems just when there has been lots of success, then along comes a child to prove the method is not quite so good.

It is time the public began to realize in teaching, since teachers do not work with machines, there will never ever be 100% success. "Productivity" efficiency level will never reach the level of machines.

When teachers know that something can be done and are unable to do it, then the "slings and arrows" from an uninformed public are most discouraging.

Teacher confidence is on the wane and it is therefore difficult to be genuine and concrete, two of the critical teacher characteristics.

Caught between these two pressures no wonder the classrooms can be tense!

Trying to do too much too quickly brings tension and reduced effectiveness.

Therefore, the implications are in order to provide a non-threatening atmosphere, relevant program based on individualism which is success oriented - take off the pressure!

Provide small groups of children with whom to work and lots of preparation time. It costs money and yet the cost-benefit is worth the investment.

The final set of issues more specifically concern different age groups.

Readiness, the Middle School, dropouts, student workers are issues which need attention in our schools.

One such issue is readiness. Rather than approach it only in the traditional manner related to beginners in our school, this paper will discuss readiness at various times during the child's life.

These periods are as the children begin their school life usually in Kindergarten in Saskatchewan, as the children go from Kindergarten to Grade One, as children begin Division II from Grades Three to Four, and as the children begin Grade Nine usually in a High School. These periods could correlate with a change in instructional strategies and yet the cognitive development of the children may or may not have developed to accommodate the different kind of instruction.

When children arrive at school at about the age of five the concepts of readiness for school in a formal situation is the concern - involving separation from the home and social readiness.

The importance of the years 0-4 has produced sufficient information to alert educators to the wide variety of program models available (Deines, 1981). The kindergartens, realizing the various maturity levels of the school entrants, adjust their programs on an individual basis using

an activity centre, play, individualized program approach. In most centres, the formal presentation of symbols (word or number) is provided for only those who are more than ready and simply so eager to use symbols that to refuse to assist them would be a cruel injustice.

Committed kindergarten teachers stoutly protect their children's right to grow without the premature pressure of formal preparations for reading and mathematics. This pressure is at times intense particularly since the Grades One to Three teachers are expected to provide the foundation for literacy.

The next transition period when readiness is an issue is from Kindergarten to Grade One. Not only is there physical adjustment from sitting in a group on the rug to rows of desks, there are often tremendous strains upon the child's energy control. Children of various motor maturity are expected to sit, write, copy for particular periods. These periods are often short and the quiet/active balance in their schedule is given careful attention. However, the pressure is on,to be able to do the tasks quickly and neatly. There is usually no provision for play in a prepared environment. Many Grade One teachers are geniuses at manipulating this environment into a positive experience for children. However, if the pressure to produce using symbols were not so great but the expectation to learn about exciting ideas and about thinking was still within this class, would the results be more positive? In a recent study using United States, English and Swedish children in school for six months by age 6.6, 5.6 and 7.6 respectively, there was no reduction in reading difficulties. Age is not an excuse as to why the child cannot read and it suggests that further adaptation of instructional methods would be useful (Gredler, 1980, p.239).

What can the school do?

Declining enrolments, empty classrooms, children with a multitude of special needs, reading and learning disabled children, working parents, pressure for parental and community control all suggest that the time is ripe for a type of community school.

In Saskatchewan, community schools have come to mean schools in the inner city.

The type to be described is not restricted to inner schools.

Let us explore the idea by taking the average middle class setting in a fairly well established district. Likely if the school is small the enrolment is down, there are empty rooms. Moms and dads are working. There are a few single parents, a few children involved in French immersion programs outside the district, a few musicians in the group. In all, a fairly typical group.

Suppose the school has six classrooms and an enrolment of seventy-two students. There will be four teachers including the principal who requires time for administration.

What could happen in this school?

This could become a Division I community centre. One room could be used for a day care centre combined with a nursery school for the approximately eighteen to twenty neighbourhood children who are less than five and whose parents work. The other room could be rented to any community based organization or business from a hair dresser to a doctor to a seniors' recreation centre, perhaps even a church organized school or music teacher or a social service office. Safety from traffic could be provided using fences, creative playgrounds and supervision.

All school children would meet each morning and select under guidance the room in which they would begin their day. There is a room designed to

develop interpersonal relationships through play - yes, even for the third grade. Selection is based on interest and regular assessment. Some children move into the area designed for communication skills. This room (could be the hall, the library, a nook and cranny) would provide programs for each student and revolve around independent work, teacher conferences, group work, presentations, etc. This room is not just for reading, in fact, unless the children begin to teach themselves in the use of symbols, no formal instruction is given. However, the room is richly endowed with concrete manipulative equipment from simple to as complex as the senior Montessori Math Equipment. In the room there is much oral discussion, there are projects and there are responsibilities.

The place for play and the place for communication is not necessarily kept separate. Rational and imaginative overlap is encouraged.

Another area in the school is devoted to production skills; there children learn to do all sorts of things related to the outside world. The community is highly involved in this room. Parents who are artists, electricians, plumbers, doctors, teachers bring their expertise to this room and take the children from this room on exciting adventures via T.V. film or into their place of business.

The final room could focus upon improving the quality of the child's life. Again, individual programs in aesthetics, physical education, service to others, knowledge of self and others would be available.

Teachers would either "man" the room or move with the groups. They would be free at particular periods of each day to prepare for their room or for a particular child in any of the rooms.

The day care centre would be involved as much as possible providing noon and after school programs.

All personnel would be a professional unit including certified day care workers.

Parents would be involved in a multitude of ways from planning to volunteerism.

The advantages are that there would be a unit to meet the range of educational needs of children, the community needs of the nuclear family, and perhaps the financial needs of the school.

Certainly, there would be problems.

This is a kernal of an idea based upon La Pierre, 1981.

It seems particularly applicable to both rural and urban Saskatchewan for our general population as well as special groups.

This community school would also help with the readiness of Grade Four for children would be learning the basics in the manner Division I students need. At Grade Four children are still in need of concrete kinds of learning. There simply would not be time to teach multiplication tables and two digit division. Perhaps by the age of Division III when the children begin to learn in the abstract then division and multiplication tables for the first time over would be interesting and learned. With all the time spent on tables now,it is not until about Grade Eight that these become automatic. Surely five years of practice is not needed to learn the facts. Of course practice is needed but five years!

During Division III from Grade Eight to Grade Nine there is another readiness period. The children at that age may be in the transition to abstract thinking. Some are not, some may have been thinking that way for a year or so. Why not adjust the program between in school and community work projects (service, volunteer, career, 4-H) depending on how ready they are? This is not the end of school, it is simply a different kind of pro-

gram from which the children can benefit without learning to avoid knowledge and thus are free to return to more bookish knowledge as they are ready for it in Grades Ten, Eleven and Twelve.

Once again, careful organization, ample personnel and a lot of money is necessary to meet the needs of students. However, during the Grade Eight to Nine period, perhaps the poor children's need for money for material things can be constructively channeled. Children who are more interested in their own lifestyles have the opportunity to learn about life in the community.

An idealized situation - yes! A pipedream, perhaps!

"Lifelong learning will develop its roots if the conditions provided for learning and the kinds of learning supported are as important as what is being taught. Both of these factors require time" (Cryan and Surbeck, 1979).

Let us not be "preoccupied with pulling up the plants to look at them before the roots take hold" (Goodlad in Cryan and Surbeck, 1979, p.56).

The middle school had its inception in junior highs. However, junior highs were really high schools in disguise. Currently the middle school is in a process of sorting. It is sorting out the instructional methods and content from curriculum which is appropriate for those students in the age range of twelve to fourteen. Using early childhood principals and the characteristics of concrete and/or abstract thinking as well as the content of the real interests of these students, slowly there is emerging a viable experience (Klingele, Siebers, 1980).

For high school students this paper has selected two issues related to the school - dropouts and student employment.

Magnusson, 1977, provides a detailed report concerning the difficulties of early school leavers in the labour force. Their school preparation is

not employment related, it is for further schooling.

His proposal includes a more defined conception of the idea presented in the previous section related to readiness.

It is upon the basis of employment that dropouts are of concern to the school system. If young people could leave the system, find a productive, happy livelihood and live an enriched life, the school experience would come to a successful conclusion for that child.

However, the sad news is that leaving school causes problems. It does not solve them. In fact, life may become less than rewarding. Making money becomes an empty dream. Friends become scarce (Jones, 1977).

Suicide rates are high for eighteen to twenty-four year olds. Is this related to unemployed dropouts?

The types of jobs are seasonal and subject to lay off. The majority of dropouts do not return to school once they have left. So the notion that the real world will show them how much they need an education does not seem to follow.

Perhaps it is the school system?

The model presented by Magnusson would meet financial needs. Perhaps day care if a problem could be resolved in centres for the children of single teenage mothers. Courses in conjunction with the community would provide relevancy.

In Saskatchewan the dropout rate in regular high schools and in technical high schools is about 20% in Division IV. There is a greater rate in technical schools. Have they found jobs? There is a greater rate among native students. Why? There are also dropouts in elementary schools of which a great number are native and under the age of sixteen.

What can schools do?

The schools must provide time for alot of contact with approachable staff who also present in an appropriate manner work oriented and relevant material. This material must be culturally compatible and come from the community. The middle school ideal works toward this. Magnusson (1977) also offers practical ideas.

Other models are presented by Holland (1979) who suggests that at the base of programs which provide a work-school balance is the attitude of the community. Public education and community involvement is absolutely essential for the school to successfully organize such programs.

If fifteen to nineteen represent the nearly half our future, can we risk it?

The final issue in this section relates to the student who has a part-time job and is unable to take a full load with ease and success. Incomplete assignments, skipping classes, ill health, and fatigue are the common symptoms.

The school-work community school could ease the situation. However, the tradition that school is open from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. September to June may be less than effective.

While school could open all year, they must also remain available for the academically inclined students who wish to complete high school in four years. What is the rush for those not contemplating further education at this time?

Teacher surplus, flex hours, preparation time, low enrolments, small classes all make the educator's job attractive.

The important issues revolve around the students who could work but not at the expense of their education, academics included.

In conclusion, the future for the 80's looks bright with hope. If the

financial committment is forthcoming, perhaps these diverse needs of all Saskatchewan children can be met.

Children in Communities

The final section of this paper moves the Saskatchewan children from their homes, from the schools, into the community.

Children usually experience the community at a conscious level when they are allowed to leave the yard. The next step is driving their tricycle "just up to the corner". Next comes crossing the street, going to a friend's and going to a corner store and finally, joining your first group - Beavers for some, a church group for others, T-ball for still others.

At this time children could be five to six to seven years of age.

By this time they have experienced the essence of community - the realization that there are caring and uncaring elements in this world. There are Block Parents and traffic.

Getting home safely is an exhilerating experience.

In order to foster independence and simultaneously teach children the joy of trust in dependence the community becomes another "school" in the education process.

> Some Saskatchewan children have ample community resources to use. Some children have none. Together the schools, parents, and community must provide for the needs of these children.

What is a description of children in relation to their community?

Lots of bits and pieces come to mind.

Children are used by the community. Open candy bins, impulse items are often child size high. T.V. advertisements use children. The needs of children are used to line the pockets of many businesses!

Children are protected by the community. Child proof bottle caps, seat

belt legislation, immunization clinics, rated movies and our churches.

One aspect of the lives of children omitted without discussion is the spiritual life of the child.

In the community context the various church bodies can provide a nurturing support for children and families with urgent needs and can provide ways in which people can service each other. It would be unwise to underestimate the impact faith has upon the lives of children in our Saskatchewan families. Such a foundation provides many a child with the support necessary to learn.

Children are provided with ample recreational activities (Saskatchewan Culture and Youth, 1982), ample health services (Russell, 1980) in some areas...for some children...(Exner, 1982).

It is not the purpose of this paper to examine the community resources of the child since another subproject of the Minister's Advisory Committee for the Curriculum and Instruction Review examines Community Resources as well as Social Service supports.

Suffice it to say that the community provides excellent services but there is not equal opportunity across our province.

What are the educational needs as related to the community?

The continuum of need for community involvement becomes greater as children grow. In the beginning the children generally need protection and a safe place to try out all their learning from school or elsewhere. They also need to sample all facets of the community.

As the children grow older they still need to use the community, now as a theatre stage upon which to react to others in order to formulate their lifestyle.

Finally, as older youth, the need of the child is to be guided into

just the right place compatible with their emerging lifestyle.

Therefore, the educational needs are gradually to experience more in the community.

What are the school implications?

Simply the school can provide a smorgasbord of experience in the community, a deeper study in specific areas as the children grow older, actual planned contact in which the child contributes to his community and finally, a planned transition from the school to the community through career education.

In order to actualize these implications first the school needs to be aware of what is available not only for the regular child but for those children who have special needs.

This in itself is a nightmare for there is no one centre federally or provincially that provides for the affairs of children as in the Child Development Office in America. Two kinds of local inventory could be in progress for your area by Saskatchewan Social Services (Exner, 1982) or Saskatchewan Culture and Youth (1980). The formats may be useful and certainly the content would perhaps give a full picture. Schools can work with local volunteer groups to provide a local profile.

Next with parents and community members there needs to be a plan of action which moves the children gradually with ease into their community.

This plan would reflect the cultural reality of the area.

In this manner the home, the school and the community can cooperate to remove the barriers that keep our children from maximizing their true potential.

Conclusion

Describing the Lives of Children: Saskatchewan Facts is an exciting adventure. The children, as seen from a bird's eye view, as a large provincial group, are equally distributed both male and female in our rural and urban areas.

A closer view of children in more specific groups provides a multifaceted dimension of their lives.

What is seen?

These groups have particular needs. Some children need urgent attention particularly the poor, be they native or white, in two or one parent families. Others need more opportunities to grow such as all the language minority groups or gifted children.

At this point this paper begins to look at the lives of children from within their usual surroundings; the home, the school, the community. From this vantage point the lives of children reveal personal joy and agony.

In Saskatchewan one can come to the conclusion that all is well because for the majority of children life is just fine.

However, in good conscience, there are children whose needs are great. These needs affect their education and their ability to learn so critically that our schools cannot afford to ignore this hurting minority.

Somewhere in Saskatchewan a child is unable to learn due to home, school or community inadequacies.

What can the school do?

Levin (1977) challenges the school.

> Does the myth of equal opportunity have to be held out like a carrot while the stick of low marks, public embarrassment and failure follow close behind...?

The school can turn this stick into a crutch until the child is strong

enough to walk with dignity.

This crutch needs to be fashioned by parental, community and governmental commitment through a coordinating structure to address all children's lives.

It is our responsibilities as the citizens of this province to invest ourselves in the lives of children - free them to learn.

Since this paper is about children, the last word should come from them.

When asked to tell about their lives, these were their comments!

"I'm free here, not like in the other places."

"It's good, I guess. I've never been anywhere."

"I like being able to go where I like."

"Mommy and daddy, they love me."

"One thing bugs me, it's all this talk about economics."

"I can earn money here but I hate the cold."

"It's great - there's hockey and baseball besides I have my family - even my sister's okay."

"It's okay but the kids are mean sometimes. No one can do anything about it but I wish they were nicer."

In response to - what do you need in order to learn? these are their responses!

"All I need is a teacher who talks to me."

"I need help when I need it and don't want to be told I can do it - think."

"My teacher is so busy..."

"I like sports and I need that."

"I need to be allowed to come to school to just turn in assignments

and write tests. I get 90% all the time but I hate sitting in class."

"I need teachers who are enthusiastic about what they teach and use different ways. Then I'd learn more."

"I need computers. All my friends know about them but I can't get one."

"I need a teacher who smiles at me."

"Blocks, books, a big gym."

Finally, when asked how the school could help, following are the answers.

"They can help by letting the teachers talk to us alot."

"They can see me as me and let me do things others can't do if I can be responsible."

"I need more help. My mom is too tired at night."

"I like lots of things to work on."

"Shorter hours - shorter year - more work."

"We need to sit around and talk to someone who'll listen and do something. We'll help."

The many lives of children
Range in great degree
Across the wide and open plains
As many people see...

Parents say they know their child,
But that may not be true,
For children are a mystery
To others...even you!

But not to worry
Soon you'll see
There is a Great big recipe
For all children small yet free.

P.B.W., 1982

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